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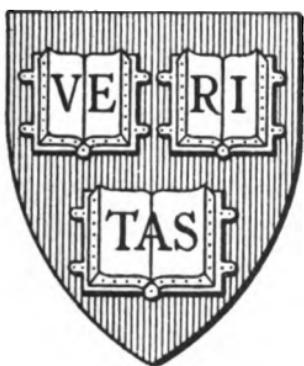
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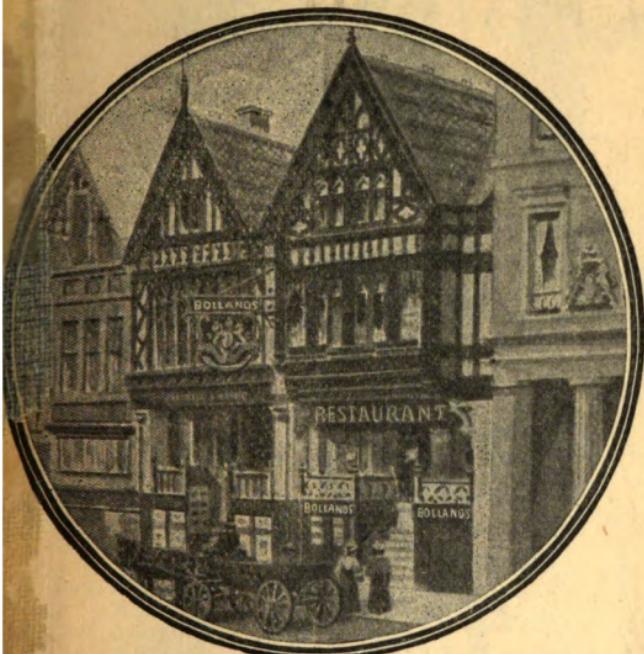
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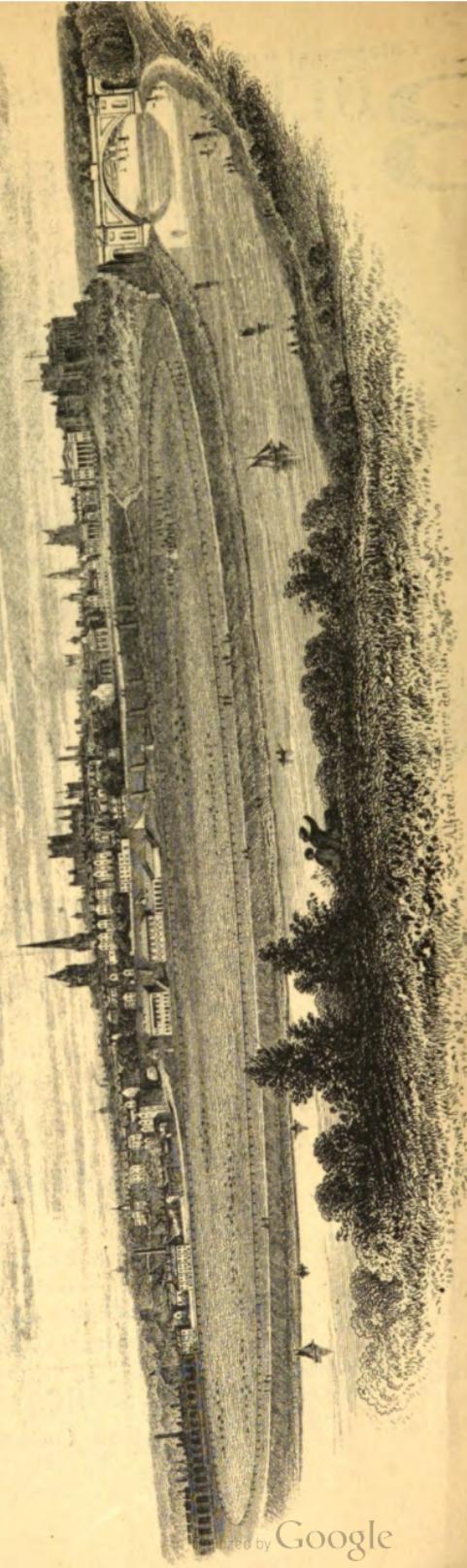
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THE STRANGER'S

HANDBOOK TO CHESTER,

EATON HALL,

HAWARDEN CASTLES,

AND VICINITY.

BY G. ASHDOWN AUDSLEY

WITH PLATES AND DRAWINGS

A Historical, Architectural, and Descriptive Guide,

BY

GEORGE ASHDOWN AUDSLEY, F.R.I.B.A.,

Author of several Works on Architecture and Art.

REVISED BY PUBLISHERS, 1908.

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THE HANDBOOK TO CHESTER.

INTRODUCTION.

CHESTER stands alone amongst all the ancient cities and towns of Great Britain—unique in its history, disposition, and architectural character. Certainly we have no town which has retained so many important monuments of its original founders; and which presents at the present day so many evidences of its mediæval character. In addition to this no town in Europe can show its walls in so complete a state as those of Chester. These facts alone are sufficient to render Chester a place of absorbing interest to the antiquarian, architect, historian, and the educated visitor. It is not too much to say that no intelligent visitor will ever regret or forget the days or hours he may devote to the examination of this most interesting place.

Speaking of the early state of Chester, Winkle truthfully remarks:—"Of all the Roman stations in Britain, Chester seems to have been the most important. It was

called *Chester par excellence*, all other stations or *chesters* had some addition to distinguish them from one another and from this, which was *the chester, the camp, the station* of stations. What it might have been before the Roman invasion, may be left to the enquiry of those who delight to roam at large in the wide and pleasant regions of conjecture. To those who would rather tread the paths of certainty, it will be sufficient to trace the history of this city no higher than the settlement of the Romans on this spot, of which there can be no doubt. Proofs of this fact are numerous enough in and near the city of Chester, such as pavements, brick work, vessels and coins of Roman workmanship." We agree with Winkle in this; and shall content ourselves in the following brief survey of the History of Chester by tracing its rise and progress from the Roman occupation. Chester was doubtless an early British town or camp long before the Roman Invasion, and, in conjunction with the natural advantages of its situation, it in all probability was of considerable importance. Whatever it may have been, it was swept away when the Twentieth Legion took possession of the spot and made it the most important camp in Britain.

During the Middle Ages, Chester was a city of no small importance, as will be seen by the brief historical notes which follow. From the beginning of the tenth to the end of the seventeenth century the city appears to have been frequently disturbed by wars and rumours of wars; but from that epoch until now Chester has been left in comfort to cultivate the arts of peace; and to hold its proud position as the business heart of a lovely county teeming with agricultural wealth.

At the present time Chester is both a favourite place of resort and residence ; its noble river and its quaint old-world character making it the former, whilst its great salubrity and its pleasant surroundings naturally recommend it as a place of residence. In addition to this, Chester is exceptionally well provided in the matter of creature comforts ; and house rents are moderate in comparison with other towns of equal importance.

In the following pages it shall be our best endeavour both to guide and interest the visitor ; and it shall be our care to miss no object or place which is worthy of his study or attention.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL

The City of Chester anterior to the Roman Invasion—Chester occupied by the Romans—Roman works in England—Are there any remains of Roman walls round Chester?—The City occupied by the Romans, the Britons, the Saxons, and the Danes—The valiant Ethelfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great, restores the City—King Edgar occupies Chester in 971—Hugh Lupus and the seven Norman Earls of Chester hold the City—The Welsh irruption in 1255—Edward I. visits Chester several times—Edward II. visits the City in 1312—Henry VI. visits Chester in 1459—Henry VII. visits the City in 1494—Miracle Plays—The “Sweating Sickness”—The Siege of Chester by the Parliamentary Forces—King Charles visits Chester, and witnesses whilst standing on the Phoenix Tower the defeat of his army on Rowton Heath—The brave defence of the City—The surrender of the City. The Restoration—King James II. visits Chester in 1687—The Pretender threatens the City

HERE is every probability that during the times of the Ancient Britons and anterior to the Roman Invasion the site on which Chester is now built was occupied by a town of some importance: its favourable position both with reference to sea and land, on the banks of so fine a river as the Dee, must have recommended it to the early inhabitants of the country, just as it did, at a later period, to the warlike Romans.

With the Roman occupation of Chester the history of the city strictly commences, although we find allusion to the existence of a British town in the writings of Ranulph Higden, a monk of Chester Abbey. In Wynkyn de Worde's edition of this worthy monk's “Chronicle,” published in A.D. 1495, we find the following:—

“The Cyte of Legyons, that is Chestre, in the marches of Englonde, towards Wales, betwene two arms of the see, that bee named *Dee* and *Mersee*. Thys cyte in tyme of

Britons, was hede and chyefe cyte of all Venedocia, that is, North Wales. Thys cyte in Brytyshe spech bete Cartileon, Chestre in Englyshe, and Cyte of Legyons also. For there laye a wynter the legyons that Julius Cezar sent for to wyne Irlonde. And after, Claudius Cezar sent legyons out of the cyte for to wynn the Islands that be called Orcades. Thys cyte hath plente of lyveland, of corn, of flesh, and specyally of samon. Thys cyte receyveth grate marchandyse, and sendeth out also. Northumbres destroyed this cyte sometyme, but Elfleda, lady of Mercia, bylded it again, and made it mouch more.

"In thys cyte ben ways under erth, with vowtes and stone werke, wonderfully wrought, three chambered workes, grete stones ingrave with old mannes names there in. Thys is that cyte that Ethelfrede, Kyng of Northumberlonde, destroyed, and sloughe there fast by nygh two thousand monks of the mynster of Bangor. Thys is the cyte that Kyng Edgar cam to, some tyme, with seven Kyngs that were subject to hym."

According to another monk of Chester Abbey, Henry Bradshaw, who lived towards the end of the fourteenth century, the founder of the first town on this site was "a mighty strong giant" named Leon Gauer. In this writer's poetical "Lyfe of St. Werburgh," the following lines occur:—

"The founder of Chester, as saith Polychronicon,
Was Leon Gauer, a mighty strong giant;
Which builded caves and dungeons many a one,
No goodly buildings, ne proper, ne pleasant
But King Leil, a Briton sure and valiant,
Was founder of Chester by pleasant buildings,
And of Caerleil also named by the King."

All, however, is uncertainty with reference to the early history of Chester; historians, on the one hand, maintaining that there was no occupation of the site previous to the establishment of the Roman camp; and, on the other hand, assuring us that there was a British town here, known as *Caerleon Vawr* and *Caerleon ar Difyrddwy*, and that it was a town of considerable importance. If such was the case one can understand the immediate attraction of the Roman army to the spot, and its ultimate occupation by the Twentieth Legion.

Every archæologist and student of the early history of this country is aware of the vast works undertaken and carried out by the Romans during their occupation, which extended for nearly four centuries. They constructed a system of military roads which practically opened up the whole country. That known as Watling Street extended from Richborough to Anglesea, passing through Chester; then from Chester through Manchester and York onwards to Carlisle. Extensive building operations were carried out in all directions. Fortifications, walls, temples, baths, and private residences were erected in the more important centres, and in these matters Chester was by no means neglected, as remains which have been preserved to our day clearly prove. Regular forms of civilisation soon took the place of the rude arrangements of the semi-barbarous life of the Britons; and personal security, arts, and letters found themselves established in the wild retreats of the uncultivated inhabitants, where the elegance of the Roman was warmly welcomed. As Eccleston remarks:—"Alliances were formed with several tribes, and their chiefs encouraged to put themselves under Roman protection. These soon became vassals of Rome, and even gloried in the title: their subjects learnt to speak the Latin language, adopted Latin names, clad themselves in rich raiment, and vied with the conquerors in every Roman luxury."

The date at which Chester became a Roman camp (*castra*) is quite uncertain, but it seems clear that it was not until sometime in the latter half of the first century of our era that it was a place of settled occupation. With the advent of the Twentieth Legion came the greatness of the city, and it was not long before the construction of temples, baths, and other public buildings was actually pressed forward. Of what nature the fortifications were we shall never know. The first *vallum* was doubtless of earth and turf, as was usual in the ordinary *castra*, but it is probable that a wall or *vallum* of stone was ultimately constructed, in which were placed the four gates—namely, *Porta Principalis Dextra*, *Porta Principalis Sinistra*, *Porta Praetoria*, and *Porta Decumana*, now practically represented by the four gates in the present walls.

It is extremely doubtful if a single piece of the Roman *vallum* or wall exist to the present day although very decided

views obtain on the matter. The following extract from *St. James' Gazette* (March 8, 1888) places the present state of the question so clearly that we venture to give it here :—
“ It is many a long day since antiquaries have been so furiously engaged as in the great battle now being waged over the walls of Chester. The ‘ Institute ’ having met at Chester in 1886, horrified archæologists in general, and local enthusiasts in particular, by announcing that the city wall assigned to Roman builders was no older than the Great Rebellion, or, perhaps, indeed, than Queen Anne. Thereupon the ‘ Association ’ promptly took up the challenge, met at Chester last year, and reaffirmed the orthodox faith. Meanwhile, the spade revealed in the heart of the contested wall a wondrous collection of moulded, inscribed, and sculptured stones, and all the fat was at once in the fire. The fight has waxed fiercest over a really remarkable sculpture which has since been ‘ on tour.’ This represents a Roman matron, with mirror and patrician scarf, or a mediæval saint, with nimbus, stole, and chalice, according to the party you embrace. Incidentally, we learn that water-holes in the walls are pointed out ‘ to Americans ’ as bullet-holes, and that ‘ when they became still larger the guides assign them to round shot.’ ”

Now, as we have never been satisfied on the existence of any authentic remains of Roman masonry in the walls of Chester, and have no desire to lead the visitor astray, we shall pass over this contested question with the simple advice that all statements respecting the present existence of portions of the ancient Roman walls be taken with a grain of salt. To the usual visitor, however, the question is of very little interest one way or the other ; and, fortunately, Chester presents sufficient attractions and objects of interest outside all Roman remains. Of the authentic Roman remains we shall have something to say in a future chapter.

The greatness and glory of the Roman Empire passed away ; and the Roman occupation of Britain came to a close. After the departure of the legions the entire country once more fell into a state of semi-barbarism. Chester, a coveted spot, seems to have been in turn occupied by the Romano-Britons, the Saxons, and the Danes. The latter retained occupation only for a brief period, for Chester was restored to the Saxons by the valiant Ethelfleda, daughter

of Alfred the Great, and wife of Ethelred, Earl of Mercia. As it is stated that Ethelfleda rebuilt the walls and restored the city, it seems reasonable to suppose that the *vallum* or walls constructed by the Romans had either been of an unimportant character, or had been razed to the ground by the Britons, Saxons, or Danes in the preceding years. The rebuilding and, according to some authorities, the extension of the walls took place in the year 907 A.D. After the death of this energetic princess, Chester once more fell into the hands of British princes, who held it until 924, when it was taken by King Edward the Elder, the father of Ethelred the Unready.

It is recorded that about the year 971 Edgar occupied Chester with his victorious army, and that his fleet filled the river in the vicinity of the city. History connects this Saxon King in a very direct manner with the immediate neighbourhood of the Church of St. John. Speaking of this, the late Dean Howson, in his interesting work on Chester remarks :—"As regards its historical associations, it should be observed, in the first place, that the water in front of the Church is that reach of the river Dee, over which the Saxon King Edgar, was rowed, in 973, by eight British Chieftains. His landing place is on the rocky ground immediately under the Church ; and from the Church, on looking down the river towards the old bridge, can be seen the starting point of that short but very expressive voyage. The picturesque little Chapel among the foliage, is also connected by tradition with Saxon history. It is said that Harold, having 'lost hys lefte eye' in the battle of Hastings, 'yescape to the countrey of Chester, and lived there holylie in St. James' cell, fast by Saynt John's Church.' This is pure legend ; but the former story is, I believe, authentic ; and certainly it represents, in a very animated manner, the decisive and final defeat of the Britons by the Saxons."

From this time until the Norman Conquest history records nothing of importance connected with Chester ; but on the accession of William the Conqueror, his nephew, Hugh Lupus, was created Earl of Chester, and was invested with supreme authority over both city and county. Here he exercised almost regal sway and surrounded himself with all the pomp and ceremony of a petty court. 'For one hundred and sixty years did Hugh Lupus and his successors,

the seven Norman Earls of Chester, exercise this petty sovereignty, until the death of Earl John Scott, in 1237, when Henry III. took the Earldom, with all the powers annexed to it, into his own hands; and from that period to the present it has been held by the English Crown. The title of Earl of Chester was conferred by Henry upon his eldest son, afterwards Edward I. It has ever since been vested in the reigning monarch's eldest son, and is now enjoyed by His Royal Highness, George, Prince of Wales.'

"In 1255, the Welsh, under their Prince, Llewellyn, made an irruption into this neighbourhood, carrying fire and sword to the very gates of the city. The following year Prince Edward, who had recently been created Earl of Chester, paid a visit to the city, and received, in the castle, the homage of the nobles of Cheshire and part of Wales." The hostile inroads of Llewellyn remained unavenged until King Henry, in 1257, summoned his nobility and bishops to attend with their vassals at Chester, in order to invade the Principality.

"In 1272, Edward I. ascended the throne, and soon gave indications of his determination to subject Wales to the English yoke. This monarch was at Chester in 1276, and again in 1277; in the former year he came for the purpose of summoning Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, to do him homage; who having refused to comply, he returned the next year with an army, and marching from Chester, took Rhuddlan Castle, and made it a strong fortress. In 1282, we again find Edward I. in the city, where he resided from the 6th of June to the 4th of July. The following year, having been victorious in his expeditions against the Welsh, he was at Chester with his Queen, and attended mass at St. Werburgh's Church, on which occasion he presented the Abbey with a cloth of great value. In September, 1284, the King was at Chester for four days, and again passed through the city in 1294, on his march to Wales, to suppress the rebellion of Madoc." No English monarch since the conquest has spent so much of his time, as did King Edward the First, with his liegemen at Chester.

"In 1312, his son Edward II. came to Chester to meet Piers de Gaveston, on his return from Ireland.

"In 1399, Henry of Lancaster, in arms against Richard

II., mustered his troops under the walls of Chester ; whence, on the 19th of August he marched for Flint, and returned on the following day with Richard, whom he lodged in a tower over the outer gateway of the castle, opposite to Glover's Stone, and afterwards conveyed a close prisoner to London.

“ In 1459, Henry VI., with Queen Margaret and her son Edward, visited Chester, and bestowed badges, in the shape of little silver swans, on the Cheshire gentlemen who espoused her cause.

“ On the 13th of July, 1494, Henry VII., with his mother and the Queen, came to Chester with a courtly retinue ; thence they proceeded to Hawarden,—the Earl of Derby, and a number of ‘ Chester gallants ’ attending them on their progress.”

During the fifteenth century the practice of performing “ *Miracle Plays* ” in the public streets of Chester was introduced. The exact date of the introduction of these plays and the true cause of their introduction remain uncertain. According to some persons they were written, and produced under the direction of the chronicler, Ranulph Higden, but there is no substantial ground for this belief. According to Rogers the Archdeacon, who witnessed the performance of these plays at the end of the sixteenth century, the actors with their moveable stages and properties went from street to street throughout the city, giving all the inhabitants an equal opportunity of witnessing their curious and probably instructive performances. Some of the plays which are still in existence strike the modern mind as more laughable than anything else ; but, doubtless, they were considered very solemn affairs in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

“ The summer of the year 1507, was memorable here from the awful visitation of the ‘ sweating sickness,’ which raged for a short time with great violence. It is recorded that 91 householders were carried off in three days by this distemper : but it is worthy of remark, that the female sex were generally exempt from the sickness, only four having fallen victims to the disease. In 1517, the sweating sickness again proved fatal to many of the inhabitants ; and the city was also infected with the plague, probably to a more serious extent. It is recorded that ‘ many died, and others fled out of the city, insomuch that the streets were full of

grass'; and 'that for want of trading the grass did grow a foot high at the Cross, and in other streets of the city.' In 1550, the city suffered severely from the sweating sickness, and to this affliction was added a great scarcity of provisions, corn selling in Chester at sixteen shillings a bushel. From the year 1602 to 1605, with a few intermissions, the dreadful effects of the plague were experienced in the city. It is stated to have begun in the month of September, in the former year, at the house of one Glover, in St. John's Lane, in whose house alone seven persons died. The contagion was particularly fatal in 1603 and 1604; 650 persons died in the former year, and 986 in the latter; at one period 55 died weekly. During this dreadful visitation, the fairs of the city were suspended, the court of exchequer was removed to Tarvin, and the county assizes were held at Nantwich. The plague had abated in the month of February, 1605."

During the succeeding thirty-seven years many minor events took place in connexion with the city but they are not of sufficient importance to call for special notice in this brief survey. In the month of August, 1642, the entire country was thrown into a state of civil war through the Commons being in open rebellion against the Crown. On the 25th of the month King Charles, then at Nottingham, declared war against the Parliament.

"Three weeks after this, the King came to Chester, accompanied by a numerous train; the incorporated companies of the city received him and conducted him to the Pentice, where he and his suite were entertained. After the banquet, £200 were presented to his Majesty, and half the like sum to the Prince of Wales. On the 28th of September, the King proceeded to Wrexham, escorted by the Corporation to the city boundary.

"War being declared, Chester was deemed a place of great importance; and his Majesty sent hither Sir Nicholas Byron, with a commission as Colonel-General of Cheshire, and Governor of Chester. A levy of 300 men was ordered by the citizens, independent of the trained bands, and a rate was made for their maintenance, the Aldermen of the city taking command of the new troops in their several wards. The outworks and entrenchments were carried on with such vigour, that in the beginning of the summer,

1643, the *mud walls, mounts, bastions, &c.*, were all completed, and several effective batteries planted."

It was not long before these defensive works were put to the test. On Thursday, the 19th of July, 1643, Sir William Brereton, General of the Parliamentary forces in Cheshire, attacked the city in a very determined manner. The works were, however, resolutely defended, and the Parliamentary army was repulsed with considerable loss, whilst the defenders are said to have lost only a single man. The conduct of the loyal Cestrians on this and subsequent occasions is deserving of great praise; and considerable sacrifice of property was readily made to prevent the besiegers effecting an occupation in any form. Sir William Brereton having been taught so severe a lesson withdrew his forces and left Chester alone for the time.

On the 11th of November following, Sir William Brereton, attended by Alderman William Edwards, who had filled the office of mayor in 1636, visited and demanded the surrender of Hawarden Castle. The garrison under Thomas Ravenscroft, of Bretton, at once opened the gates. Now in possession of the town and castle of Hawarden, Sir William could very seriously interfere with the supplies of coals and provisions to Chester; and feeling that he was in a strong position, he sent a peremptory summons to Sir Abraham Shipman, Governor of Chester, requiring the immediate capitulation of the city, under pain of severe punishment in case of his refusal. The Governor assured Sir William that he was not to be intimidated by threats, and bade him "come and win the city if he would have it." The Governor, however, did not overlook the serious character of the summons and its accompanying threats, and immediately set about the strengthening of his position. He had all the suburb of Handbridge burnt so as to afford no shelter to the enemy. Several mansions in the neighbourhood of the walls were also burnt, amongst which were Bache Hall, Flookersbrook Hall, and Overleigh Hall. The authorities busied themselves in still further strengthening the defences of the city; three troops of horse were raised, for the maintenance of which the loyal citizens assessed themselves according to their means, and converted one hundred pounds worth of the city plate into coin, 'some of which pieces, stamped with the city arms, still exist in the cabinets of numismatists.'

In 1644, Lord Byron was made governor of the city. On the 13th of February of this year, a sharp battle was fought in the suburbs, near Boughton, which ended in another defeat of the Parliamentarians, attended with a loss on the Royalist side of about 100 men, chiefly citizens.

On the 19th of September, the Parliamentary forces from Beeston Castle made a brisk attack on the city, but were repulsed with considerable loss.

“By the end of February, 1645, the enemy had succeeded in surrounding the city, and placed garrisons at Hoole, Rowton, Eccleston, Iron-bridge, Upton, &c. In this position affairs remained until the middle of September, when the garrison was gladdened by the news that Charles himself was on his march for the relief of the city. The exultation of the citizens was beyond all bounds: but there is reason to believe, that in their excess of joy measures of prudence were grievously neglected.

“On the 27th of September the King, with his guards, and Lord Gerard, with the remainder of the horse, marched into the city, amidst the acclamations of the soldiers and citizens. The condition of the garrison now presented a promising appearance. Sir Marmaduke Langdale, as previously arranged, passed the river at Holt, and marching in the direction of Chester, drew up his forces upon Rowton Heath, about two miles from the city, where, on the afternoon of the same day, a decisive battle took place, the Parliamentary forces, under Major-General Poyntz, totally routing the Royalists. His Majesty, attended by the Mayor, Sir Francis Gamull, and Alderman Cowper, had the mortification to witness the rout of his army from the leads of the Phoenix Tower. On the following day the royal fugitive took his departure, by way of Hawarden, for Denbigh Castle.”

On the 29th of September, the besiegers succeeded in effecting a breach in the city wall near the Newgate, but were repulsed in an assault made at night. They seem to have done nothing of a noteworthy character until October the 7th, when they practically surrounded the city with a strong body of horse, and, backed by it, made fierce assaults in several places at the same time. Notwithstanding that the besiegers managed to gain a footing on the top of the walls, they were met with great bravery and determination

by the citizens, and were beaten back and thrown off with a considerable loss of life. This so greatly disheartened the Parliamentary General that he gave up all hopes of carrying the city by assault; and he accordingly determined to closely blockade the place and starve the inhabitants into surrendering.

“The beginning of 1646 found the garrison in want of the common necessaries of life, being so reduced as to be compelled to feed upon horses, dogs, and cats. In this extremity the citizens rejected nine different summonses, nor, till they received assurances that there was no hope of succour, did they answer the tenth. The negotiations occupied six days, when conditions were agreed to—that the garrison should march out with the honours of war, and that all the ammunition, stores, &c., in the castle, be delivered up without injury to the besieging army.

“In conformity with these articles the brave and loyal city of Chester, which had held out twenty weeks beyond expectation, being reduced by famine to the utmost extremity, was, upon the 3rd of February, 1646, formally surrendered to the Parliamentary forces. For two years nothing had been heard but the sound of warlike preparations, and during most of that time the citizens were enclosed within their Walls, the victims of starvation and constant apprehension. The incessant drains upon their property for the maintenance of the garrison, and the support of their fugitive Prince, had levelled the different classes of the community to one common condition of beggary. The whole suburbs presented an undistinguishable mass of ruins, while the Walls and edifices within the city were defaced or battered down by the destructive cannon. In addition to this the city lands were all mortgaged, the funds quite exhausted, the plate melted down, and the Churches, particularly St. John’s, being so long in the possession of the enemy, greatly damaged.”

In July, 1659, a large body of citizens and others, under the command of Sir George Booth, seized the garrison for the exiled King Charles II., but, afterwards, were defeated in the battle at Winnington Bridge by the Parliamentary forces under General Lambert. The Royalists suffered considerable loss. A few months afterwards things were changed in Chester, for, according to the

city records, the return of the King was hailed with great rejoicings. Chester has ever been a loyal city.

After the civil wars were over Chester seems to have settled down and cultivated the arts of peace. It was visited by James II. in August, 1687, and subsequently by his Protestant successor, William, Prince of Orange.

On the Pretender threatening in 1745 to attack the city, the inhabitants once more bestirred themselves, amply provisioning the place and strengthening the fortifications. Nothing, however, came of the threat and the city was left in peace.

From this time down to the present day the records of Chester offer nothing worthy of special note.

CHAPTER II.

ROMAN ANTIQUITIES OF CHESTER.

Positions of the original Roman streets—Altars found in Eastgate Street—Altars and other interesting Roman antiquities preserved in the Grosvenor Museum—Remains of a Roman Bath in Bridge Street—The Hypocaust and its description by Vitruvius—Other Hypocausts found in Chester—Remains of public buildings—The Forum of Chester—Roman House—Tombstones and other remains.

CONSIDERING the long occupation of Chester by the Romans, it is natural to expect that many and important remains of their public works should exist even to the present day. Numerous remains have been found; and doubtless many more exist buried beneath the present buildings of the city, at depths varying from eight to twenty feet below the present surface.

Although the main streets which traverse the city from north to south and from east to west may be considered as representing the streets as laid down by the Romans, they do not accurately follow the original course of those streets. Archæologists who have carefully considered this matter have come to the conclusion that the direction of the Roman streets may be arrived at in the following manner:—On the north, in **UPPER NORTHGATE STREET**, there is a short stretch of the original way; and on the south, the **ECCLESTON ROAD** presents nearly a mile of the way; accordingly, as the Romans invariably affected straight roads in their military stations, a couple of parallel lines drawn through the heart of the city, connecting these portions, will indicate very clearly the direction of the ancient street. By such a method we find that the entrance of the Town Hall is very nearly over the centre of this supposed street. Now with reference to the road from east to west, it is believed that both in **FOREGATE STREET** and **WATERGATE STREET** the Roman way can be traced; and accordingly lines drawn

between these portions indicate the direction of the street through the city from east to west. It will be found that neither EASTGATE nor WATERGATE STREETS follow correctly the ancient boundary lines. It has been along the lines we have mentioned that the greater number of Roman remains have been found, in the form of altars and inscribed stones. The remains of public buildings have been found in BRIDGE STREET, and round the corners into EASTGATE STREET and WATERGATE STREET. Some interesting altars have also been found in EASTGATE STREET. One of the best preserved altars was found in 1861, on the premises of Mr. George Dutton, in this street. It was found under about thirteen feet of earth; and is supposed to have been buried by the Romans with the view to its preservation. This interesting altar, of which the accompanying cut furnishes an idea, is now preserved in the Grosvenor Museum of the city.



INSCRIPTION ON ALTAR.

GENIO

SANCTO

CENTVRIE

AELIVS

CLAVDIAN

OPT - V . S .

*The inscription expanded
will read thus :—*

GENIO SANCTO CENTURIAE.

AELIUS CLAUDIANUS OPTIO.

VOTUM SOLVIT.

Translated:—To the Holy Genius of the Century. Aelius Claudianus the Optio performs his vow.

This inscription records that the altar was dedicated to the Genius of a *centuria* of the celebrated Twentieth Legion, by one Aelius Claudianus its *optio*, an officer or lieutenant nominated by the centurion.

In the Grosvenor Museum is another interesting altar in very good preservation. The following cut conveys a good idea of this altar. On the top is a bas-relief of a human face encircled by a twisted wreath. This portion forms the *focus* of the *ara*.



INSCRIPTION ON ALTAR.

PRO . SAL . DOMINORVM . NN .
 INVICTISSIMORVM
 AVGG . GENIO LOCI .
 FLAVIUS LONGVS
 TRIB . MIL . LEG . XX . V . V
 ET LONGINVS FIL . EIVS DOMO
 SAMOSATA . V . S .

The inscription expanded will read thus :—

PRO SALUTE DOMINORUM NOSTORUM INVICTISSIMORUM
 AUGUSTORUM. GENIO LOCI. FLAVIUS LONGUS TRIBUNUS
 MILITUM LEGIONIS VICESIMAE VALERIAE VICTRICIS, ET
 LONGINUS FILIUS EJUS DOMO SAMOSATA. VOTUM SOLVERUNT.

Translated :—For the welfare of our most invincible Lords the Augusti. To the Genius of the place Flavius Longus, a Tribune of soldiers of the Twentieth Legion, the Valerian, the Victorious, and Longinus his son, natives of Samosata, perform their vow.

In an interesting catalogue of the Roman antiquities in the Museum, compiled by the Honorary Curator, is given the following information respecting this altar :—“Much interest attaches locally to this Altar. It was found near the EASTGATE as far back as 1693. It was absent from Chester for nearly a century. Hearing of its whereabouts the late Dean Howson was instrumental in securing its return to the city. The pedestal upon which it stands was stated to have been found with it at the time. If so the Altar as set up to-day appears much in the same form as when seen by the Roman soldiery hundreds of years ago. The subject matter of the inscription is deeply interesting, and valuable for its historic data. Again, it is most elaborately carved and in good style, on all four sides : even the focus is not exempt from decoration. Attention too may be called to the figure of a Genius on the left hand side. It is the local Genius of the place—of Deva,—the Genius Loci as it is termed. There has been below the figure an inscription to that effect, which is now all but obliterated. Taken as a whole this Altar is one of which the Museum may be proud, as it is in many respects unique. It is well deserving of careful study.”

In the Grosvenor Museum, the visitor and lover of Roman antiquities will find an interesting altar dedicated to Minerva, bearing this abbreviated inscription :—

DEAE MINERVAE FVRIVS FORTUNATVS
M . A . G . P . V . S .

Also an altar to the Genius of Avernus, bearing the following short inscription :—

GENIO AVERNI IVL . QVINTILIANUS.

In the Museum are also to be seen fragments of other Roman altars, tombstones, inscribed and sculptured stones, and a "pig of lead" still bearing the word of CAESAR as part of its inscription.

The remains of Roman buildings which have been discovered in the process of excavating have been numerous and highly interesting. The most important have been found in the neighbourhood of BRIDGE STREET. On the east side of this street, and nearly opposite the narrow passage called PIERPOINT LANE, are still to be seen the remains of what was originally part of a public Roman Bath. The earliest particulars we have on the subject of the arrangement and construction of the baths of the Romans are those given by Vitruvius in his Fifth Book. Speaking of the caldaria of a bath, he says :—" The insulated stages of the caldaria are thus constructed. The floor is made inclining towards the furnace ; so that if a ball were placed upon any part of it, it would not remain at rest, but take a direction towards the mouth : by which means the flame will more easily pervade the interval between the floor, which is paved with tiles a foot and half square, and the suspended stage. Upon the floor earthen props, eight inches each way, are arranged at such intervals as to receive upon them square tiles two feet in length : the props are two feet in height ; the tiles which form them are cemented with clay and hair mixed together : the square tiles which they support form the substratum of the pavement of the caldaria." In this passage we have clear directions for constructing that portion of a Roman bath called the hypocaust, the arrangement adopted by the ancient architects for heating both the apartments of their baths and the immense tanks of water

required for the hot water baths. The hypocaust mentioned by Vitruvius was probably an extension or continuation of that under the sudatorium or sweating baths. After reading the above passage from the pen of Vitruvius, the visitor is better prepared to understand and appreciate what he sees on entering the Roman Bath in BRIDGE STREET. Here the remains of a Hypocaust is seen, forming the floor of an apartment, in all probability the sudatorium of the establishment. The Hypocaust was originally constructed with thirty-two square props, two and a half feet high and one foot square at top and bottom. Twenty-eight of these are still *in situ*. Brick tiles, eighteen inches square and three inches thick are placed on the tops of the props and upon them are laid tiles two feet square. These larger tiles, which are perforated with small holes, formed the "substratum of the pavement" of the sudatorium. According to some, these holes were for the purpose of allowing the heat to ascend to the chamber above; but this idea is altogether wrong, and implies great ignorance of the architectural skill of the Romans. It is probable that the perforations were made to prevent the large tiles from cracking or flying in the furnace or kiln: at all events the bath builders never sought to allow the noxious fumes from the burning wood to ascend into the sudatorium to suffocate the bathers. A floor was certainly laid on the large tiles so as to at once temper the heat, and to retain it when the fire was low or altogether extinguished in the furnace of the Hypocaust. Visitors to Chester and all antiquarians are greatly indebted to the late Alderman Royle, who in erecting the adjoining buildings took great care to preserve this interesting and instructive relic of Roman Chester, and who so considerately arranged matters that visitors might conveniently inspect the Hypocaust. Adjoining the Hypocaust is a deep tank supplied with water from a spring.

'On June 22, 1863, while workmen were engaged in clearing the site of the old Feathers Hotel, a coaching establishment of repute in the last generation, they came suddenly upon the remains of another Hypocaust, formed of red sandstone pillars, and which, on further investigation, proved to be part of a larger, and clearly at one time important, structure covering a large area of ground. The antiquarians of Chester were speedily on the alert, and from

day to day fresh discoveries were made, ending in its being proved, almost to demonstration, that this was the site of the Roman Forum of Chester; and that the building which once stood there, the massive columns of which were still in part remaining *in situ*, was one of the most important structures of the Roman era that had been discovered anywhere in England. Fragments of walls, colonnades, tessellated and herringbone pavements, inscriptions in marble, &c., were among the relics turned up on this most interesting site. A full account of the whole, from the pen of Dr. Brushfield, who explored the place daily during the progress of the work, appears in the 8th part of the "Chester Archæological Journal."

In the neighbourhood of WHITE FRIARS and COMMONHALL STREET important Roman remains have been found at different times during the process of excavating. Whilst excavating behind the premises at the corner of PIERPOINT LANE, on the west side of BRIDGE STREET, in the year 1858, some interesting remains were brought to light. The workmen first came upon a portion of a massive sculptured column, in red sandstone; and then in the progress of their cutting discovered two other columns, of smaller dimensions, in a direct line westward and at equal distances from the first and from each other. On the same spot were found roofing tiles bearing the mark of the Twentieth Legion, and a broken stone inscribed with the letters VCINI, now preserved in the Grosvenor Museum. In 1849 the fine pig of lead, already alluded to, was found near the old Common Hall, in COMMONHALL STREET.

In the year 1779, workmen, excavating in the neighbourhood of STANLEY PLACE, WATERGATE STREET, came upon the remains of a Roman house and hypocaust, and certain other antiquities, including a fine altar bearing the following inscription:—

FORTVNAE . REDVCI
AESCVLAP . ET . SALVTI . EIVS
LIVERT . ET . FAMILIA
PONTII . T . F . GAL . MAMILIANI
RVFI . ANTISTIANI . FVNISVANI
VETTONIANI . LEG . AVG
D . D .

This altar and other antiquities found in 1779 were first taken to Oulton Park, but are now fortunately preserved in the British Museum.

Several interesting tombstones have been found at different times and in different localities. One, to the "divine shades" of Callimorphus and Serapion, was discovered in the year 1874, near the walls, at the Grosvenor Bridge end of the Roodeye. Another was found in 1861, in the south-east corner of St. Oswald's Churchyard: this is to the divine shade of Caesonia Severiana. Both these stones are in the Grosvenor Museum.

Doubtless many important remains and proofs of the greatness of Roman Chester are still in existence, buried beneath the soil and debris accumulated by ages of destruction and change: and it is desirable that all excavations made in new sites should be conducted with care, and be watched by the local antiquarians. Much of interest may yet come to light as time moves on and new buildings take the place of old ones.



CHAPTER III.

ON ENTERING CHESTER.

The General Railway Station—Flookersbrook—Queen Hotel—Albion Hotel—Chester Tramways—City Road—Royalty Theatre—Park Road—Grosvenor Park—Foregate Street—Old Watling Street—Queen Street—The Old Justing Croft—The East Gate—Ascent to the City Walls.

HS the greater number of visitors enter Chester from the large and important Station in which the London and North Western ; the Great Western ; the Chester and Holyhead ; the Birkenhead ; and the Chester, Mold, and Denbigh Railways meet, it is the most appropriate starting point for our description of the objects which will interest the sight seer.

About sixty odd years ago the ground upon which this noble Station stands, and the surrounding neighbourhood, were simple fields and kitchen gardens. A little brooklet, spanned by a rustic bridge, flowed close by, and from it the locality derived its rather odd-sounding name. Flookersbrook has now, through the agency of steam and iron, become the busiest spot in Chester, practically the heart of the city and neighbourhood. The Station was first erected in 1847-8, at the joint expense of the four principal companies. The buildings were designed by Mr. C. H. Wild, C.E., and Mr. Thompson, of London, and built by the famous contractor Mr. Thomas Brassey, who was born in Cheshire. The Station was enlarged in 1889-90, at which time its accommodation was doubled. It now contains six through Passenger lines and eight “docks” or “bays,” com-

municating with fourteen platforms in all. One of these platforms extends to the length of 1470 feet, or about a quarter of a mile. The façade of the Station, opposite the end of CITY ROAD, is about 350 yards long, and in addition to this there are the horse and carriage annexes of about equal length. All the buildings are of dark red bricks, with the necessary



General Railway Station.

ornamental facings and dressings of Storeton stone. The entrance to the Station is protected by a veranda roof, and opens into the Booking Hall. Immediately inside, on the platforms, are Waiting Rooms, Refreshment Rooms, Left Luggage and Parcel Offices, Lavatories, Telegraph Office, Post Offices, &c., Bookstalls, and other conveniences. Communication with the Island Platform is secured by means of foot-bridges with staircases for passengers, and inclined ways and hydraulic lifts for luggage. The Station is covered by four iron roofs, the largest being of 60 feet span. The two roofs

over the new portion are carried upon wrought iron columns with glass screens between. This treatment has a light and pleasing appearance.

Outside the Passenger Station are two main through goods lines, and numerous sidings communicating with the extensive Goods Warehouses, Wharves, Engine Sheds, &c.

The Station comprises about 28 miles of railway lines; and the very complicated system is controlled from seven Signal Cabins. The largest of these Cabins contains no fewer than 170 levers connected with points and signals. The signalling arrangements are of the most modern and complete type, having been carried out by the Signal Department of the London and North Western Railway Company.

The Goods Warehouses have an area of about 50,000 square feet, yet their accommodation is fully taxed. The Station Committee manufacture all the gas required in the Station, and an independent Waterworks furnishes an unlimited supply of pure water. It is calculated that above a quarter of a million gallons are required daily to meet all demands.

The first object which meets the eye of the visitor on leaving the main entrance of the Station is a lofty building on the left, at the corner of CITY ROAD. This is the Queen Hotel, erected by a company in 1860, and enlarged in the following year, at the total cost of £20,000, for the special accommodation of railway travellers. This establishment, which make up 100 beds, is well managed and has a good reputation. The public rooms are spacious and convenient; and pleasant private sitting rooms may be had on the first floor. A covered passage connects the Hotel with the Station platform. The statue of Her Majesty, placed over the entrance porch, was sculptured by Mr. Rossiter, and presented to the Hotel by W. Titherington, Esq., Chairman of the Company. At the opposite corner of CITY ROAD, a branch of the original Queen Hotel was erected by the Company in 1867, under the name of the Queen Commercial Hotel, but now called the Albion Hotel. It is connected with the Queen Hotel by an underground passage.

Between these two hotels is the starting place of the Electric cars belonging to the Chester Corporation. The cars go up CITY ROAD and then through the most interesting streets of the city. They pass through the EAST GATE and EASTGATE STREET, then down BRIDGE STREET, and past the Castle, over

GROSVENOR BRIDGE (adjoining the Racecourse) past Overleigh Lodge (the principal entrance to Eaton Hall Park) and on to Saltney, a manufacturing suburb on the borders of Flintshire. Visitors or railway passengers who may only have an hour or so to spend in passing through, cannot do better than take a car as far as **GROSVENOR BRIDGE**, and then return in the first passing car to the Station. A hasty glimpse of the Rows and the quaint houses and streets can be so obtained, which is certainly better than passing through Chester without seeing anything. A branch line going east from the end of the City Road leads to the populous suburb of Boughton and Dee Banks.

As the visitor walks up **CITY ROAD** he will observe a lofty round tower at a short distance, on the left; this is the Shot Tower of Walkers, Parker and Co's. Lead Works. Here is made lead shot which has a reputation wherever skilled sportsmen are to be found.

Further onward on the same side of the road, and just before reaching the Canal Bridge, is the City Road Wesleyan Chapel, a building of some pretensions, which indicates a flourishing condition so far as the Denomination is concerned.

Across the Canal and nearly opposite the Chapel are the large Flour Mills of Messrs. F. A. Frost and Sons. An immense business is done in these well known and long established Mills.

Further on, on the same side of the **CITY ROAD** after crossing the bridge, is the Royalty Theatre. The house inside is convenient and pleasing, and is the only Theatre in Chester: the best travelling dramatic and opera companies are constantly engaged. Directly opposite is the Presbyterian Chapel, erected as nearly as was possible to the site of its predecessor, the old Octagon Chapel, which had to be taken down in consequence of its obstructing the line of the newly-formed road. In this older Chapel, the early disciples of Wesley for many years worshipped: and here, too, he himself often preached when making his periodical tour of the Methodist connection. Architecturally considered, the building lays no claim to the visitor's admiration. A few steps further on and the visitor enters **FOREGATE STREET**, close to the spot where, prior to this century, stood an ancient postern, called the Barrs, which like the old Cowgate, formed part of the outer fortifications of the city during its memorable siege. The large suburb which lies to the left is Boughton, where a

branch tramway has lately been added. Opposite the end of CITY ROAD is a striking building—the County Constabulary Office. It is of red brick, designed in the style of architecture often met with in old German towns, where brick is the chief building material available. A few yards to the right of this building is GROSVENOR PARK ROAD, leading directly to the principal entrance of Grosvenor Park.

GROSVENOR PARK ROAD, short though it is, is not without interest to the visitor who cares anything for artistic building. The first building on the left hand is the Baptist Chapel, and extending therefrom to the Park gates is a row of pretty and carefully designed brick houses, the work of Mr. John Douglas, architect, of Chester. Opposite the row of houses is a large Church, belonging to the Roman Catholic body, and dedicated to St. Werburgh. The portion of the church erected is of imposing proportions, and is richly decorated within. The visitor now enters

GROSVENOR PARK.

On the right stands the Lodge, built in the half-timbered style for which Chester is noted; the whole of the woodwork is of oak, and on the gables, under canopies, are figures of William the Conqueror, and the seven Norman Earls of Chester, with their arms below and monograms above. The barge boards are ornamented with the arms and mottoes of the City and of the Grosvenor Family. There are three or four entrances to the Park at different points. At the end of the main walk, opposite to the FOREGATE STREET entrance, is an octagonal space, surrounded with seats and screened with low walls, on the top of which are light iron railings. The Sebastopol trophy guns presented to the city by Government, occupy a prominent position on either side of this space. To the south of the main avenue are also two Boer guns, captured in the late South African War. In immediate proximity to this is the Statue, by Thornycroft, of the noble donor of the Park (the Marquess of Westminster), placed here in 1869.

At the foot of the hill, which here slopes to the river, is "Billy Hobby's Well," a celebrated spring, over which has been erected a handsome cover, standing on red granite shafts, and neatly carved; beneath the canopy are two small pumps fixed, by which the water can readily be drawn from the well. Between this and the river runs a broad promenade, with a massive river wall.

GROSVENOR PARK contains nearly 20 acres of land, and measures 420 yards in length by about 240 in breadth. It was publicly handed over to the city by the noble donor, on November 5, 1867, in the presence of the Mayor and a vast assemblage of citizens. The Park has been entirely laid out by a landscape gardener; and the whole of the buildings, walls, &c. have been erected from designs by Mr. Douglas.



Foregate Street, Old Houses.

Having viewed the Park and its objects of interest, the visitor should return by PARK ROAD or by BATHS STREET, where are situated the Corporation Baths, well equipped in every way and fitted with all modern developments—there are two spacious swimming baths and numerous hot and cold private slipper baths. The main thoroughfare was named indifferently FOREST or FOREGATE STREET, the latter, from its leading to or standing immediately before the gate—the EAST GATE of the city—which has always been considered the *porta principalis*. FOREGATE STREET forms part of the ancient Watling Street of the Romans. Fifty years ago this was as curious and interesting a street as any within the city walls; but the ancient covered ways which ran

continuously along it are now only to be traced at long and irregular intervals. Some of the older buildings are worthy of a passing observation, and one modern buiding, to be seen on the left hand side of the street, is a good reproduction of the half-timber work for which Chester has always been famous, and of which some remarkably fine examples are still preserved. The building alluded to is a Cocoa House, given to Chester by the late Duke of Westminster, and designed by Mr. Douglas.

Opening from the right hand side of FOREGATE STREET is QUEEN STREET, chiefly interesting to the antiquarian as the street which led to the old "Justing Croft," where, in mediæval times, the tournaments, justs, and other passages of arms were held by the knights and squires of Cheshire. Doubtless such names as Calveley, Done, Dutton, Egerton, Cholmondeley, Grosvenor, Warburton, and Legh were often shouted within its boundaries. The "Croft" occupied the north end of the street and extended over where the canal now passes.

Returning to FOREGATE STREET a glance may be given to a new block of buildings on the left side. This is the front of the Union Hall. The old Union Hall, a large quadrangular building galleried all round towards an open court, was erected in the year 1809, for the accommodation of merchants who came from Lancashire and Yorkshire to attend the great fairs held in Chester in July and October.

Passing ST. JOHN'S STREET, on the left, and leaving its objects of interest and the grand old Church to which it leads, for the present, the next important object which presents itself to the visitor is the EAST GATE, a wide central arch spanning the roadway, with two smaller lateral archways for the pedestrian. This structure was erected at the expense of Lord Grosvenor, in the year 1768-9. A mediæval gate with pointed and segmental arches, flanked by octagonal towers, was removed to make way for the present tame and utilitarian structure, which, however, has been improved by the addition of an ornamental iron Clock Tower with side railings, Chester's Memorial of the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty, the Clock itself being the gift of Col. Evans-Lloyd, a four dial timepiece which is conspicuous from many parts of the City. The Gothic gateway was believed to have been erected in the reign of Edward III., but was probably of later date. On the left of the EAST GATE is a block of buildings characteristic of the old style of the ancient City, recently erected by the



The Eastgate.

proprietors of the Old Bank and comprising commodious shops on the ground floor with suites of offices behind and above. The front is carried out in half timber framing in the Jacobean style peculiar to Chester, and the first floor projects over, forming an arcade similar to those so much in vogue in FOREGATE STREET. Messrs. Lockwood and Sons were the Architects.

The visitor may now either enter EASTGATE STREET and inspect the interesting Rows; or he may ascend the flight of steps on the North side of the Gate, and so start his agreeable walk round the walls of the City. We shall suppose he has decided on the latter proceeding, and, in the following Chapter, conduct him in his interesting stroll.



CHAPTER IV.

THE WALK ROUND THE CITY WALLS.

The Walls of Chester—King's Arms Kitchen—Corn Exchange—South-east and East View of the Cathedral—Kale-yards Gate—Phoenix Tower—King Charles I. and the Battle of Rowton Moor—View from the Walls—The Dean's Field—Reputed Roman Remains in Walls—Chester and Ellesmere Canal—The North Gate—Morgan's Mount—View from the Mount—Pemberton's Parlour—Barrow Field—The Public Grounds and Remains of Roman and Mediæval Art—Bonewaldesthorne's Tower—The Water Tower—Chester Infirmary—Queen's School—Old Linen Hall—The Water Gate—Custodians of the City Walls.

DO town in England can boast of Walls so perfect and so continuous as Chester; and the walk round them, on a fine and clear day, is never likely to be forgotten by the visitor. Apart from this agreeable and interesting stroll, the Walls themselves are of great interest to the antiquarian and lover of English history, for from the time their foundations were first laid up to a comparatively speaking, recent date they have seen many changes of people, many warlike scenes, and many ups and downs. Although we have already spoken of the ancient Walls in our First Chapter, it may not be out of place to add a few further words here which the visitor may read as he stands for the first time, perhaps, on the EAST GATE.

The Walls of Chester may be safely accepted as mainly of the Edwardian period, although they present work of other times. It is claimed that substantial remains of the original Roman fortifications are still visible to the eye of faith, and we shall not gainsay it, for there is no doubt that Roman work

may be still underneath part of the present walls, and that stones hewn by Roman masons may be built into their structure. Indeed, granting that the Romans walled the city, it would be strange and unreasonable to question the use of the Roman masonry in subsequent erections. The Walls as they now exist afford a continuous promenade of nearly two miles in circumference, and, as we have already said, are the only complete specimen of that order of ancient fortification now remaining in our islands. The walls of Shrewsbury, York, and some other places that occur to us, though highly interesting, cannot be compared to the "proud old ramparts of Chester." As a respected citizen of this grand old place has said:—"Where is the pen or the pencil that can depict the scenes of glory and renown, inseparably bound up with the history of the Walls! For three or four centuries the Roman soldier kept watch and ward over them, and over the city; but no sooner had their legions withdrawn from Britain, than the whole island was shaken to its centre by the ruthless invasion of the Picts and Goths. Deserted by their old protectors, the Romano-Britons invoked the aid of the Saxons, under Hengist and Horsa; who, landing at the head of a powerful army, in concert with the Britons soon drove the invaders from their quarters within the Walls of Chester. The Saxons in turn, perceiving the weakness of the unfortunate Britons, determined on possessing themselves of the country; and, during the conflict that ensued, Chester was frequently taken and retaken by the respective belligerents, and many a fierce and bloody battle raged beneath its Walls. In 607, for instance, Ethelfred, King of Northumberland, laid siege to the city, and after a sanguinary struggle not far from the city, during which he put one thousand two hundred British monks to the sword, wrested the place from its native defenders. Again, however, the Britons returned to the rescue; and, driving out the usurpers, retained possession of Chester for more than two hundred years. The Danes were the next invaders of old Chester: but about the year 907, Ethelred, Earl of Mercia, and Ethelfleda, his Countess, restored the shattered Walls and Gates of the city; in which state they remained

Bristling with spears, and bright with burnish'd shields,
through many a long and eventful epoch of England's history,
Chester's faithful safeguard against every foe. In what good

stead they availed the city during the trying period of the great Civil War, a former Chapter has sufficiently declared."

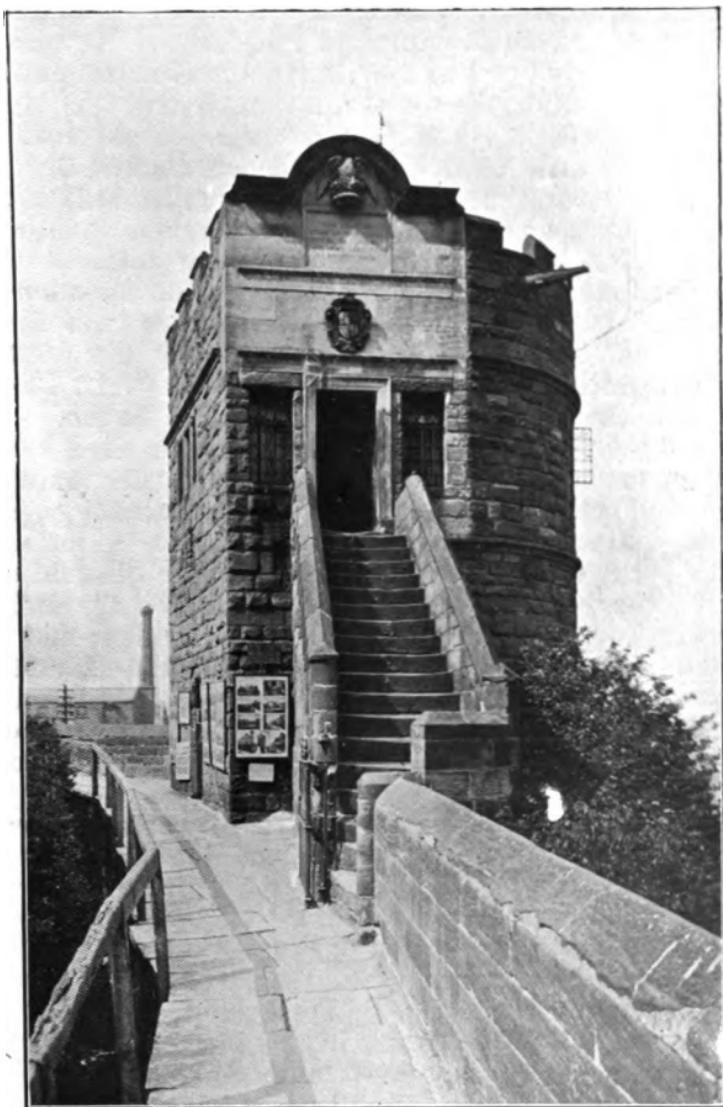
Probably the steps by which the visitor has ascended to the Walls give a first impression the reverse of favourable, but he will soon find objects of interest sufficient to remove such an impression. The first buildings which present themselves to the eye are the King's Arms Kitchen, as it is called, erected on the site of a tavern dating back to the days of Charles the First, who, according to tradition, is said to have established the mimic Corporation for which the house has long been notorious—one of the many strange social institutions abounding in old Chester. Passing on, the visitor comes to a building which was once a portion of old Manchester Hall, and a celebrated mart during the annual Chester Fairs, but now transformed by modern enterprise and architectural skill into a commodious Corn Exchange. A few steps northwards, and a venerable and striking prospect suddenly reveals itself. To the left, and so close that the sounds of its noble organ reach the ear, stands the grand old Cathedral of St. Werburgh; seen from this point on the Walls perhaps to better advantage than from any other possible point of sight. The general plan and disposition of the Cathedral are clearly to be made out. It is, like the generality of English Cathedrals, a cruciform structure, comprising a nave, choir, and transepts, with a massive tower rising at the crossing. The Southern Transept was until 1882 a separate Parish Church, dedicated to St. Oswald, but is now restored to the Cathedral. The Choir extends eastward from the tower and terminates in the Lady Chapel, which comes very close to the city wall. In 1868, under the auspices of the late Dean Howson, the Restoration of the Cathedral was commenced, the work being placed in the hands of the late Sir George Gilbert Scott, of London, by whom so many of our Cathedrals have been restored and beautified. Since that date the work has been steadily carried on, and with the most successful results. The Cathedral has been not only beautified but prevented from becoming a mass of ruins. Between the Cathedral and the Walls is the burial ground, which was a place of sepulture long before the Norman Conquest. On the margin of this graveyard a Roman sculptured gravestone was found in 1860. This seems to point to the probability of there having been a Roman place of interment close to the spot. As the Cathedral forms the subject of a Special Chapter, nothing further

need be said here on the Building. Below the Wall on the right is the Old Hop-pole Paddock, maintained by the Corporation under lease from the Dean and Chapter, and which is laid out as a Park and Recreation Ground. Passing along the Wall the visitor will shortly find himself at the end of ABBEY STREET and immediately over the Kale-yards Gate. This small postern leads to the Kitchen gardens, or, as they were commonly called in Chester, the *Kale-yards*, which formerly belonged to the Abbot and Monastery of St. Werburgh. The gateway was made for the convenience of the monks, by permission of the citizens, in the reign of Edward I., to prevent the necessity of bringing their vegetables by a circuitous route through the East Gate. Workshops now occupy the spot where the kale for the monastic kitchen flourished during the middle ages.

The visitor now finds himself at an interesting portion of the Walls. Before him stands a mouldering old tower, part of the mediæval fortifications of the city. Three hundred years ago it was familiarly known as "Newton's Tower"; but at the present day it is called the Phœnix Tower from the crest of one of the city companies which still ornaments its south side, above the elevated door. It is now a sort of small museum. Looking up as he approaches the tower, the visitor can read on an inscribed tablet the rather startling announcement that

KING CHARLES
STOOD ON THIS TOWER
SEPTEMBER 24TH, 1645, AND SAW
HIS ARMY DEFEATED
ON ROWTON MOOR.

History affirms that it was actually upon the roof of this tower that King Charles I. stood and beheld the unfortunate defeat of his forces, under the command of Sir Marmaduke Langdale, on Rowton Moor. They were on their way to reinforce the garrison of Chester, when they were attacked by the Parliamentarians, under General Poyntz, and completely routed. The conflict was a severe one, and six hundred men are said to have been killed. The Phœnix Tower was at that time used as the meeting chamber for



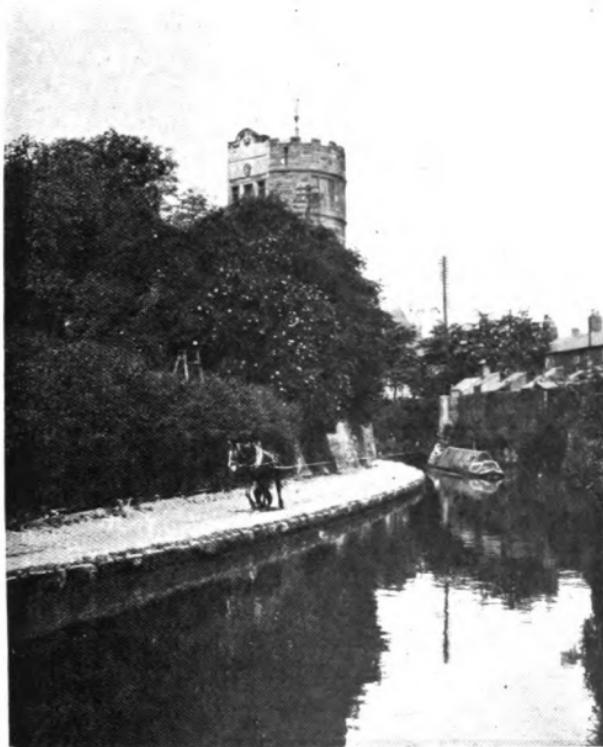
The Phoenix Tower.

business connected with several of the city guilds or companies; and the arms of the companies were placed on the exterior. One only of these remains to the present day, that of the Stationers' Company, placed there in 1613.

The view from this portion of the Walls is extensive. In the distance are the Broxton and Peckforton hills, at whose end stand the ruins of Beeston Castle, once a stronghold of no mean importance, and now an interesting spot to the tourist. Towards the left may be seen the old forest of Delamere, often mentioned in the stories of ancient Cheshire. Between the hills and the eye stretch many miles of Cheshire's fertile land in the state of highest cultivation. The foreground comprises several objects of minor interest which require no lengthened notice. Immediately on the other side of the fosse is the Temperance Hall. To the left is the suburb of Newtown, a creation of the last century, rising from which is the modest little spire of Christ Church. Visible above the intervening buildings is seen the long façade of the Railway Station, the Shot Tower of the Lead Works: and farther to the right the City Waterworks with their lofty chimney and elevated water tank. Immediately beneath the Walls, taking the course of the ancient fosse, the sleepy Canal flows languidly along, scarcely a ripple disturbing its surface. The bridge which crosses it towards the right of the Phœnix Tower, is known as Cow Lane Bridge; and near it, on the other side of the Canal, is the Cattle Market, removed from NORTHGATE STREET to this site in 1849. Adjoining this is the Smithfield, opened in June, 1884, where the horse fairs are now held; they were held formerly in FOREGATE STREET.

As the visitor, before leaving the vicinity of the historical tower, once more looks up and reads its quaint and melancholy inscription, his mind will naturally revert back to that sad September day, when Charles the First stood on this very spot and saw his gallant cavaliers borne down by the grim soldiers of Oliver Cromwell's army. For three years he had maintained a doubtful contest with his Parliament: and though for a time the success of his troops in the western counties had given a fitful gleam of prosperity to his sinking fortunes, the tide had now turned, and one disaster followed another in quick succession. On the fields of Naseby and Marston Moor he had been signally defeated. Bristol had fallen; Prince Rupert had been disgraced and sent beyond the seas; and the prospect daily grew darker. Chester remained firm: and hither Charles had come to encourage his loyal subjects, and give to the battle which seemed inevitable the cheering influence of his kingly presence. The city had been besieged

for some months, and the houses in the suburbs were mostly destroyed.



The Phœnix Tower (from Without-the-Walls.)

On the 24th of September, the King entered Chester; and the same day his troops gave battle to the Parliamentary forces. Charles, with the Mayor, Sir Francis Gamull, and others, here watched the progress of the contest (some accounts state that they first viewed the battle from the leads of the Cathedral, when a Captain fell shot, by the side of the King); and when at last all hope was gone, and his soldiers fled before the fiery Puritans, he turned from the melancholy spectacle, descended the steps of this Tower, and the next day with some

difficulty made his escape from the city. This defeat was but the precursor of worse misfortunes. Within four years from that day, a crowd was gathered in front of the Palace at Whitehall. A man in a mask severed at one blow the King's head from his body, and another, holding up the ghastly countenance to the view of the weeping spectators, cried aloud, "This is the head of a traitor!" England was not many years discovering who were the real traitors.

Charles had left Chester in worthy hands. "If you do not receive relief in eight days," said he to Lord Byron, who was in command, "surrender the garrison." The appointed time passed away, but no relief came. Day after day for four months the citizens of Chester, with a determination that claim our admiration, refused the oft-repeated summons to surrender. But there was an enemy within the walls, far more formidable than the troops without. Famine proved more powerful than the sword. When the provisions were exhausted, as a last resource the horses were slaughtered and given out in rations. Dogs and cats were eaten as dainties; and many of the inhabitants perished from the dreadful hardships which were brought to their homes. The men were not alone in this gallant defence. "The women," says an old chronicler, "like so many valiant Amazons, do out-face death and dare danger, though it lurk in every basket; seven are shot and three slain--yet they scorn to leave their matchless undertaking, and thus they continue for ten days' space; possessing the beholders that they are immortal." At last, reduced to the utmost extremity, and all hope of relief being gone, the city surrendered on condition that the public and private buildings should be unharmed by the Parliamentary troops. The Churches still bear melancholy witness to the manner in which this solemn compact was regarded. The organ and Choir of the Cathedral were broken and defaced, with a vandalism whose traces yet tell of the horrors of civil war. So much for the *Phoenix* Tower and its historical associations.

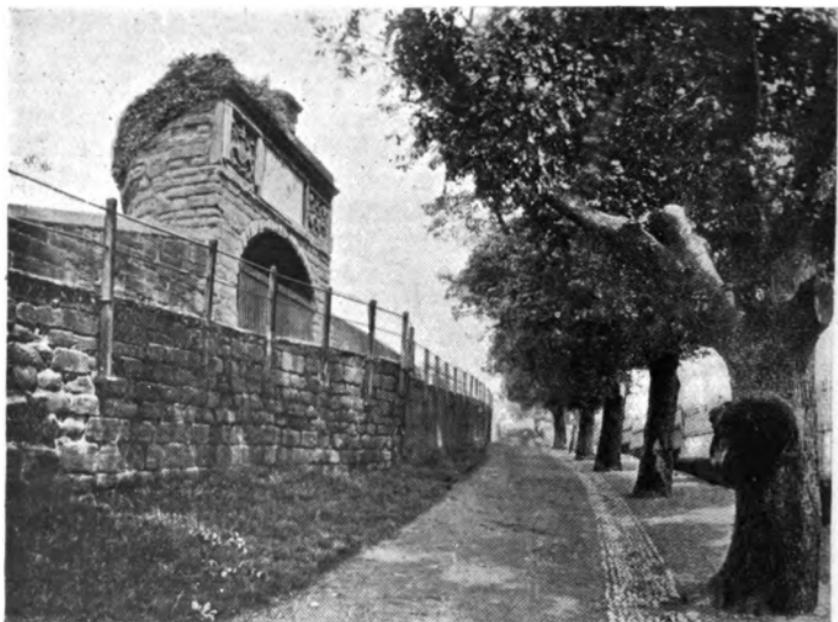
On the inside of the Walls, where the visitor is now standing, is the Dean's Field, in which some Roman remains were found in 1887. It is in the Walls hereabouts that archaeologists claim to have found remains of the ancient Roman fortifications. As the visitor walks away from the tower towards the west, or towards the **NORTH GATE** of the city, the Chester and Ellesmere Port Canal may be seen at a

great depth below on the exterior. This Canal in the other directions passes into the Midlands and also into Wales, and crosses the Vales of Ceiriog and Llangollen, on massive aqueducts designed by the celebrated engineer, Telford, passing through some of the most beautiful scenery in Wales.

The visitor now ascending a few steps finds himself on the top of the NORTH GATE, which divides UPPER from LOWER NORTHGATE STREET. The large red-brick building opposite, on the other side of the canal, is the Blue Coat Hospital, a charity school, under the same roof with the ancient Hospital of St. John,—of both which institutions more anon.

Passing on still further to the westward the visitor approaches a curious watch-tower, called Morgan's Mount, having a lower chamber, level with the foot-way of the Walls, and an open platform above, accessible by a few winding steps. During the siege of Chester, a battery was planted on the platform of this tower, and, from its commanding position and surrounded by earthworks, it successfully checked the approach of the besiegers in its neighbourhood. Mounting to the platform, the visitor obtains a fine view of a large tract of country. Almost due north, at the extremity of the suburb, stands the Diocesan Training College, a building in the modern Elizabethan style of architecture, placed on rising ground beyond a mass of dark foliage. Stretching away to the left is the Hundred of Wirral, the foreground dotted here and there with a handsome mansion or a substantial farmhouse; among which those of Crabwall, Mollington, and Blacon are most conspicuous. The Isolation Hospital, under the control of the City Council, is seen to the left. Immediately in front a magnificent view of the distant Welsh mountains is obtained. The highest peak, clearly visible on a clear day, is called Moel Famau. On this peak a column 150 feet high was erected to commemorate the fiftieth year of the reign of George the Third. It was known as the "Jubilee Column." The column subsequently fell. In the middle distance of the view before our notice is Hawarden Castle, the seat of the Grandson of the late Mr. William Ewart Gladstone, surrounded by beautiful woods. From here the estuary of the Dee is distinctly visible. Looking at the distant estuary and the now silted up channel of the river, the visitor will find it somewhat difficult to realise that Chester was once a sea port with a busy harbour. Centuries ago Chester was a more important shipping place

than Liverpool then was. As has been rightly said, what destroyed Chester as a port made Liverpool what it is; the upheaving of the estuary of the Dee was accompanied by the submergence of the forest of Leasowe, and the hollowing out of the great Mersey harbour. This convulsion of nature saved Chester from going the way of all shipping and mercantile towns, and has left it the quaint old world-place it is.



Pemberton's Parlour.

Descending once more to the Walls, and moving a short distance onward, the visitor reaches another ruined tower, originally above twice its present height. This was in days gone by called the "Goblin's Tower," but for what reason history deponeth not. It is now known as Pemberton's Parlour. The tower is semi-circular, but whether this was its original form seems doubtful. According to some it was a circular tower, having a passage way through it; but situated in a curtain wall as it is, we are strongly of opinion it was never more than a semi-tower, a form very common in mediæval fortifications. In 1720 the tower was in so ruinous

a state that a great part of it was taken down, and the remainder repaired and re-cased on the outside. The side towards the passage way was also refaced and ornamented with heraldic sculpture, and an inscription, which proclaimed that "In the seventh year of the glorious reign of Queen Anne, divers large breaches in these Walls were rebuilt, and other decays therein were repaired, two thousand yards of the pace were new flagged or paved, and the whole improved, regulated, and adorned at the expense of one thousand pounds and upwards."

Thomas Hand, Esq., Mayor 1701.

The Right Honourable William, Earl of Derby, Mayor 1702,
who died in his Mayoralty.

1702 Michael Johnson	Roger Comberbach, Esq., Recorder
1703 Matthew Anderson	William Wilson, Aldn.
1704 Edward Partington	Peter Bennet, Aldn.
1705 Edward Puleston	Esqs., Mayors. and upon the death of the said
1706 Pulest. Partington	William Wilson,
1707 Humphrey Page	Edw. Partington, Aldn.,
1708 James Mainwaring	Justice of the Peace.

Marengers.

Passing Pemberton's Parlour, the visitor sees on the left, through a grove of trees a large and verdant mead, still retaining its ancient name of the "Barrow Field," or "Lady Barrow's Hey." This is understood to be the place where the soldiers of Rome went daily through their military exercises; and where 1500 years afterwards great numbers of the citizens who died of the plague were hurriedly interred. In this Barrow Field, a temporary siding was made in June, 1858, to accommodate the stock and implements brought for exhibition at the Royal Agricultural Society's Show held that year upon the Roodeye. During the excavations for these works, several Roman graves of high interest were discovered, together with numerous vases, lamps, ornaments, and coins, of the same mighty people. The tiles forming one of these Roman graves have since been placed in the adjacent Public Grounds, and as nearly as possible according to their original arrangement, to give strangers a notion of the form and character of these early interments. The Barrow Field was purchased by public subscription, with the two-fold object of a pleasant resort for the citizens, and a sanatorium for the convalescents from the adjoining Infirmary.

The visitor now finds himself passing over the bridge constructed for railway purposes. The railway which passes

underneath is the line connecting Chester and Holyhead. At the corner of the Walls adjoining is a pot of great interest to the lover of crumbling remains of the past, and



Water Tower and Roman Remains.

the two oldest and most picturesque Towers now remaining upon the Walls, are well worth a visit. Here are deposited for public exhibition a number of interesting remains of Roman and Mediæval art, found in and near Chester during recent years, and too large to be included in the Grosvenor Museum. One of the most noteworthy objects is the arrangement of pillars which originally formed part of a Roman hypocaust, discovered in Bridge Street and removed here about 1865.

Retracing his steps to the Walls, the visitor moves to the southward a few steps to gaze upon objects of much interest. He is looking upon a pile erected in 1322, by one Helpstone, a mason, who contracted to build it for £100, a goodly sum in those days. It consists of a higher and lower tower, the former being distinguished by the high-sounding name of Bonewaldesthorne's Tower, and connected by a steep flight of steps and an embattled way with the lower tower, called the Water Tower. This latter tower was erected while

the tidal waters of the Dee flowed up to the Walls of the city; and within the memory of man the rings and bolts were seen about the old tower, to which, centuries ago, the ships that came up to the city were moored. This corner of the city's defences was of no small importance; and the annals tell us that the full fury of the Roundhead battery, planted on Brewer's Hall hill yonder, was long directed against the spot. Although terribly pounded and shaken the good old Water Tower remained erect, whilst the hearts of its defenders remained unaltering through that fierce and lamentable struggle.

The inspection of the interiors of the towers will repay the lover of old castles and fortifications. The fee is a penny for each person, which frees admission to the gardens and remains below.

Resuming his walk southward the visitor approaches a large brick building, on the city side of the Walls. This is the Chester Infirmary, and a most useful and valuable institution it is, having been founded in 1755 (in a wing of the Blue Coat School), and supported entirely by the contributions of the charitable in Cheshire and North Wales. The present structure was erected in 1761, and has accommodation under its roof for over one hundred patients, besides spacious hot, cold, and vapour baths, and all the usual adjuncts of a first-class hospital. In 1891 a new wing was erected as a Memorial of the late Col. Humberston, for 25 years Chairman of the Board of Management, the cost (£2,500) being defrayed partly by a legacy of £500 left by him to the Institution and partly by public subscriptions. The wing contains commodious kitchens and servants' offices. Nearly £8,000 has been spent on the building and approaches during the past 20 years.

Adjoining the Infirmary, upon ground once occupied by the City Gaol, stands the Queen's School for Girls, the foundation stone of which was laid by the late Duke of Westminster, on the 4th March, 1882, in the presence of a large and distinguished gathering of those interested in the School. The building, chiefly of brick and terra-cotta, is designed in a free rendering of the latest Gothic, or Tudor architecture. The internal arrangements are commodious, and well adapted for the purposes of a school for girls. A large central apartment, class-rooms, music-room, dining-room, with the necessary living rooms, kitchens, and offices are provided and conveniently arranged. The building was erected from designs by Mr. E. A. Ould, Architect.

A short distance hence is STANLEY PLACE, a double row of genteel residences, built on what was centuries ago known as the *Yacht Field*. At the upper end, within that spacious gateway, is the old Linen Hall, once the great mart for Irish linens, but owing to the change of customs due to the introduction of railways, becoming disused as a linen mart it became appropriated to the famed Cheshire Cheese fairs. The sale of the latter article is now carried on in the general market, a fair being held every third Wednesday.

In the Yacht Field, in 1779, while excavating for the houses between STANLEY PLACE and WATERGATE STREET, several Roman remains of the highest interest were brought to light, and among them an Altar, having peculiar features. This Altar, which is now in the British Museum, has its two sides richly sculptured with sacrificial instruments, as well as a cornucopia, rudder, serpent, &c. This altar has already been mentioned in the Second Chapter.

Passing onward, the visitor finds himself on the top of another of the four great gates of the city. He is now exactly opposite where he set out, and has, accordingly, half completed his circuit of the city. The WEST or as it is more usually termed, the WATER GATE (from the Dee having originally flowed up to its portals), is like the EAST and NORTH GATES, a modern structure, having replaced the old and unsightly archway in 1789, as appears by an inscription on the west side. The custody of the Chester Gates was at one time a privilege much courted by the high and mighty in the land. Thus the sergeantship of the EAST GATE has belonged since the time of Edward I. to the ancestors of the present Lord Crewe of Crewe; the NORTH GATE during that period has been in charge of the citizens: the WATER GATE, on which the visitor is now standing, was in custody of the Stanleys, Earls of Derby; whilst the BRIDGE GATE, to which we shall shortly conduct the visitor, belonged to the Earls of Shrewsbury, inheriting from their ancestors, the Troutbecks and Rabys, sergeants thereof in the fourteenth century. Below, on the outside of the Walls lies a plain of verdant grass, a place of racing celebrity known far and wide. Of this and the remaining walk on the Walls we shall speak in the following Chapter.



CHAPTER V.

THE WALK ROUND THE CITY WALLS—*Continued.*

The Roodeye—Holy Rood—Chester Races—Grosvenor Bridge—The Walls—The Barracks—Castle of Chester—Julius Cæsar's Tower—Handbridge—Church of St. Mary (outside the Walls)—Edgar's Cave—Bridge Gate—Dee Mills—Salmon Fishery—Dee Bridge—Causeway—Stretch of the Dee—Recorder's Steps—Wishing Stoops—Bishop's Palace—New Gate—Buildings in St. John Street—East Gate.

THE visitor who wishes to tread the Roodeye (or Roodee) may conveniently descend for that purpose at the WATER GATE. He will find it a beautiful meadow of nearly seventy acres in extent; but this spacious and verdant meadow was not always what it now appears. In ages past and gone—when the Saxon and the Norman held sway over the land—when colossal Liverpool was but a simple fishing hamlet—the infant commerce of England was borne along the swelling billows of the Dee, up to the very Walls of Chester. In those days the spacious lawn before us was covered with water at every tide, save only a bank or eye of land near the centre, which, being surmounted by a plain and substantial stone cross, acquired the name of the *Roodeye*, or the *Island of the Cross*. A curious legend is told of this spot which may be given here for the benefit of those who have a taste for such old-world tales.

“Once upon a time (you must not ask *when*) the Christians of Hawarden, a few miles down the river, were in a sad strait for lack of rain. Now it so happened that

in the church of that place there stood a cross and image of the Virgin Mary, called *Holy Rood*. To her shrine then repaired the faithful and fearful of all classes to pray for rain. Among the rest, Lady Trawst, the wife of the governor of Hawarden, prayed so heartily and so long, that the image, grown desperate we suppose, fell down upon the lady and killed her. Mad with rage at this ill answer to their prayers, a jury of the inhabitants was summoned, and the *Holy Rood* summarily convicted of wilful murder and other heinous sins. Fearful, however, of the consequence if they executed the offender, the jury determined to lay her upon the beach at low water; whence the next tide carried her away to the spot where she was found, under the Walls of Chester. The citizens held a *post-mortem* examination, and seeing that she was *Holy Rood*, decided on burying her where she was found, and erected over her a simple stone cross, which, tradition says, we fear, this time, not very truthfully, once bore an inscription to the following effect:—

‘The Jews their God did crucify;
The Hardeners theirs did drown,
Because their wants she'd not supply,—
And she lies under this cold stone.’

Another version affirms she was carried to St. John's Church, and there set up in great pomp, and that this Cross was erected on the spot where she was found.”

So much for the legend, in proof of which the spot on which the cross was erected is said to be still marked by a fragment of its shaft.

How often the meadow has been used for warlike exercises and civic displays and merrymaking it is impossible to say; but even setting aside the many and important race meetings which have been held here, it has seen some interesting ceremonies in the present century. It was here that on the 2nd April, 1856, the rank and beauty of the county assembled to witness the presentation of new banners to the gallant 1st Regiment of Royal Cheshire Militia. The Marchioness of Westminster, as the wife of the then Lord Lieutenant of the County, presented the colours, which were first duly consecrated by the Lord Bishop of the diocese. As this ceremony was performed almost amidst the excitement caused by the Crimean War, it lost none of its natural impressiveness and significance.

Three years after this, a whisper of coming invasion passed through the land. Once more the old Saxon warlike spirit was evoked, and the winter of 1859 saw 100,000 Volunteers in arms. Chester was again in the van of the movement, and, before the year closed, 300 men, of every class in society, were banded together in this city for the special defence of their hearths and homes. Four Companies of Rifles, and two of Artillery, represented the volunteer force of the city, and a portion of these took part in a grand Review upon the Roodeye in the month of June, 1860, when two battalions of 500 men each, performed a variety of evolutions to the satisfaction of Colonel Wilbraham, Assistant Adjutant-General, who acted as Inspecting Field Officer of the day. In August, 1861, upwards of 2,000 Cheshire Volunteers again assembled on the old Roodeye, and went through the duties and fatigues of a general field day with becoming credit. On this occasion, the prizes gained at the Cheshire Rifle Association's first prize meeting, were distributed to the winners; the Lord Lieutenant's Cup, value £50, and the chief prize of the meeting, being won, as it also was a few years afterwards, by a Chester Volunteer.

But the Roodeye is perhaps chiefly famous for the Horse Races, which have for centuries been held annually in the month of May, and which always attract thousands of visitors from all parts of the kingdom. And no wonder, for while the course itself is a perfect amphitheatre, and the spectator's view of the contests magnificent and unbroken, it is not too much to say, that the fame of the Chester Races is a household word with every lover of this old English sport.

From where the visitor has probably taken his stand, after descending, he obtains a good view of the outside of the City Walls, the grand-stand used at the race meetings, and the fine stone bridge which spans the Dee, towards the south. This bridge, known as Grosvenor Bridge, will well repay the short walk necessary to reach the river bank by its side. It consists of a truly noble stone arch of the remarkable span of 200 feet and 40 feet high, indeed it is claimed to be one of the largest stone arches in the world. It was designed by the late Mr. Thomas Harrison, a local architect and civil engineer of well-deserved fame, and was erected at the cost of £30,000. It was formally opened in October, 1832, by Queen Victoria, then the Princess Victoria. On the north-west the Roodeye is closed in by the viaduct of the



The Roodeye and Grosvenor Bridge.

Chester and Holyhead Railway, which passes the Dee, upon a massive girder bridge.

Returning to the Walls, and moving southward a short distance beyond the grand-stand, the visitor commands a splendid view of the Roodeye. Here it appears as a vast amphitheatre; and the matchless nature of its racecourse becomes evident. Beyond the Roodeye and the river which bounds its south-western curve, is Curzon Park, a quiet and favourite place of residence.

Proceeding still southward the visitor comes to a field, on his left hand, in which formerly stood the Benedictine Nunnery of St. Mary. Within living memory, portions of this conventional establishment were visible in this field, but all traces are now swept away. A new road called the NUN'S ROAD has, within the past few years, been formed through this field, making an unobstructed carriage-way from the NORTH-GATE to the GROSVENOR ROAD, and extending as the Castle Drive past the rear of the Castle through the old Gaol yard to LOWER BRIDGE STREET, and on to the Groves.

The large pile of buildings on the other side of the field, is the Barracks of the Cheshire Regiment. As the visitor approaches the GROSVENOR ROAD, which here interrupts the Walls to the extent only of its own width, he gets a good

glimpse of the Grosvenor Museum, Savings' Bank, the Church of St. Mary-on-the-Hill, and the Castle. Crossing GROSVENOR ROAD, he resumes the pathway of the Walls and approaches the buildings forming the modern Castle of Chester. A few words on the ancient Castle or Castles may not be uninteresting here.

When Chester Castle was first erected, whether during the British, Roman or Saxon occupation, is a question likely never to be determined. It is, however, recorded in history that Ethelfleda, the brave daughter of King Alfred, the wife of Ethelred, Earl of Mercia, enlarged the boundaries of the city by out-building the ancient Walls upon the south side, and thus including therein the Castle, which was beforetime inconveniently situated "without the Walls." There can be no question, therefore, that a fortress existed here long previous to the Norman Conquest; and that, although it was the chosen court and camp of Hugh Lupus, the Norman, nephew of the Conqueror, it is stated by Camden to have been merely *repaired* by that powerful baron. On the death of the last Norman Earl, the Castle passed into the hands of King Henry III.

"Henry of Lancaster (afterwards Henry IV.) having taken up arms against Richard II., in 1399, mustered his army upon the banks of the Dee, under the Walls of Chester; and Sir Piers Leigh, of Lyme, an adherent of Richard, was beheaded and his head set upon the top of the highest tower in the Castle. A few days afterwards, the unfortunate Richard and the Earl of Salisbury were brought prisoners to Chester, mounted (says Hall) 'upon two little nagges, not worth forty francs,' when the King was delivered 'to the Duke of Gloucester's sonne and the Earl of Arundell's sonne, that loved him but a little, for he had put their fathers to death, who led him strait to the Castell.'

"In 1483, Henry Percy, the renowned Hotspur, visited Chester, on his way to the fatal field of Shrewsbury, and caused proclamation to be made, that King Richard was yet alive, and a prisoner in Chester Castle, where he might be seen.

"Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester, wife of the Good Duke Humphrey, was confined for several months in Chester Castle, in 1447, previous to her removal to the Isle of Man, under a sentence of perpetual imprisonment on a charge of 'practising the King's death.'

"Here, in 1651, the Puritans '*sought the Lord*,' by trying and condemning to death the gallant and patriotic Earl of Derby, Sir Timothy Featherstonehaugh, and Captain Benbow. According to Whitlocke, the Earl 'attempted to escape, and was let down by a rope from the leads of his chamber; but some hearing a noise, made after him, and he was re-taken upon Dee bank.' He was afterwards beheaded at Bolton, while Featherstonehaugh was shot in the market-place of Chester."

Passing onwards past the higher wards of the Castle, the so-called Julius Cæsar's Tower, the visitor comes close to the river. On its opposite bank is the suburb of Handbridge, called by the Welsh, *Treboeth*, or *Burnt Town*, from its having being so often razed to the ground during their predatory incursions. The most conspicuous object is the Church of St. Mary (without the Walls) and the adjoining Vicarage. This imposing Church, designed by Mr. F. B. Wade, of London, was erected, as well as the adjoining Rectory, by the late Duke of Westminster at a cost, together, of £24,000, his Grace also contributing the site. Its spire is both the handsomest and the loftiest in the city and neighbourhood, whilst its peal of eight bells, by Mears and Stainbank, of London, is in frequent request by campanologists. Most of the stained glass in the windows is by Mr. Frampton, of London, and is well worth a visit of inspection.

The street visible opposite is mainly inhabited by the Fishermen of Handbridge. The Dee Salmon fishery has been famous for centuries, and, though it has had to contend in the past with many destructive agencies, it is still of much importance, not only to Chester itself, but as far up the course of the river as Llangollen and also in the estuary. The season extends from March to September.

The Park near the water's edge and adjoining the Bridge on the left is known as Edgar's Field, and was purchased and laid out in 1891 by the late Duke of Westminster, at a cost of over £4,000, for the benefit of the inhabitants of Handbridge and neighbourhood. Undulating down to the river, from which it is separated by a stone wall, and with one or two small but bold outstanding cliffs of sandstone, it is eminently fitted for the purpose, and with a few years growth of tree and shrub will become a beautiful oasis in the midst of increasing bricks and mortar. The highest point is surmounted by an ornamental open shelter shed. The Park was formally handed over to the Corporation in April, 1892, along

with an endowment of £1,000 for its maintenance. The field takes its name from the unreliable tradition that the Palace of King Edgar was situate there. To be found therein is a projecting rock, partially excavated, known as Edgar's Cave; and the story goes that in the year 973, that monarch was rowed thence to St. John's site by eight British petty Kings, in token of their subjection to his rule. At the entrance to the cave is a supposed Roman sculpture, almost defaced, believed to represent Minerva, accompanied by her usual attribute, the owl. It is certain that in Roman times a ford existed across the Dee at this part, and the road therefrom passed this rock. About sixty years ago there existed in the Walls a postern opposite this ford. It was called the Ship Gate, and pronounced to be of Roman construction. When taken down it was preserved and subsequently re-erected in the Groves.

A few steps further, and the visitor finds himself on the SOUTH or BRIDGE GATE, the last of the four principal gates of the city. It was erected in 1782, at the expense of the Corporation, in place of the old and ponderous gateway which previously occupied its site. The old Gate is quoted in deeds as far back as the twelfth century, and appears to have been granted by the Norman Earl Randle and his Countess to one Poyns, their servant, for some meritorious but unrecorded service. From his successors it passed, through Philip le Clerc, to the families of Raby, Norris, and Troutbeck, until the honour of "custodian of the BRIDGE GATE" became vested at length in the Earls of Shrewsbury, who, until 1867, owned that fine old timber mansion, now the Bear and Billet Inn, adjoining the Gate, and who, in the seventeenth century, sold their right of sergeantry to the Corporation of Chester.

Crossing over the BRIDGE GATE the visitor has a view of the Dee Mills, a massive pile of gloomy buildings resting on the south-west end of the Old Bridge. The Dee Mills existed on this very spot shortly after the Norman Conquest, and were for centuries a source of immense revenue to their owners, the Earls. Edward the Black Prince, as Earl of Chester, granted them for life to Sir Howel-y-Fwyal, Constable of Criccieth Castle, for his gallant conduct at the battle of Poictiers; since which time they have passed through successive owners to the Corporation, who are the present owners. The Mills have been four times destroyed by fire.

It is in the reach of the Dee between the Old Bridge and the Grosvenor Bridge that the salmon fishing industry is partly carried on, and here the celebrated Dee salmon are caught. Anyone interested in fishing may sometimes see fine fish hauled to the bank whilst he stands on the Old Bridge or on the City Walls. Salmon are frequently seen to leap the weir which stretches diagonally across the river immediately above the bridge.

The Dee Bridge is of considerable antiquity, having been erected in 1280 by the citizens, under a peremptory order to that effect from King Edward I. Previous to that date there had been a wooden bridge here, originating with that amazonian edifier of Chester, the Mercian Princess Ethelfleda; but that passage was continually subject to interruptions, both from the violence of the tides and the restless zeal of the Welshmen,—hence the erection of the present Bridge. It consists at present of seven arches of irregular size, but it is said to have originally boasted two or three more, now built up. It was widened in 1826, by the addition of a projecting footpath, seven feet wide, which has somewhat destroyed its antiquated appearance from this point of view.

The Causeway, or weir, on this side the Bridge, is recorded to have been first built by Hugh Lupus, the Conqueror's nephew, probably about the time of the foundation of the Dee Mills. It stemmed the tide of the Dee, and of all opposition, until the period of the Commonwealth, when we find an order of Parliament commanding the destruction of both Causeway and Mills; but the puritanical order appears to have been derisively set at nought; at all events, it was never carried out. An American author writing upon this topic, facetiously remarks:—"The *dam* was built, I don't know when. The Puritans, they say, tried to destroy it—for its *bad name* perhaps—but could not, because, like a duck, it kept under a high flood of water, until the Cavaliers, making a rush to save it, spiked their guns."

The buildings at the further extremity of the weir are Tobacco and Snuff Mills.

Wending his way eastward, the visitor sees before him a long and beautiful stretch of the meandering Dee, crossed in the middle distance by a light Suspension Bridge, erected in 1852 by a former proprietor of Queen's Park, the fine extent of building land to which it leads. The steps which hereabouts descend from the Walls to the river side, are

commonly known as the Recorder's Steps, from their having been erected in 1700, for the convenience of Roger Comberbach, then Recorder of Chester, who lived in the Groves below, by the side of the Dee, close to the present Suspension Bridge.

The Walls here run at a great height above the external roadway until a turn is made to the northward, at which point the visitor comes to a flight of steps, known to every Cestrian as the Wishing Steps. The name is derived from a very innocent bit of "folk lore." It was, not very long ago perhaps, believed that if any person stood at the bottom step and wished, and then ran to the top of the flight, then down to the bottom, and then up to the top again without once taking breath, his or her wish would be surely granted, by the presiding genius of the spot we suppose. The secret is that no one could possibly accomplish the feat without taking breath, and that probably more than once or twice. Many times have the lads and lasses of Chester essayed to perform the conditions attending their wishes on this spot, and doubtless many have claimed to have satisfactorily fulfilled them. From the top of the Wishing Steps the visitor has a beautiful prospect of the banks of the Dee, and of the south-eastern environs of the city. From an altitude of some sixty feet, at the point where the ancient Roman fosse is supposed to have communicated with the river, the Dee is seen in all but repose, far above the Causeway the river assumes almost the smoothness of a lake, and forms one of the finest stretches of boating water in the kingdom, and it is not neglected in this respect. To the left and at a short distance from the Walls is the Bishop's Palace, overlooking the river, the house and grounds occupying the site of two older mansions, the residences of the late and learned Archdeacon Wrangham and Chancellor Raikes. The old Palace was attached to the north side of the Cathedral, a dismal site, whereon the sun never shone from year's end to year's end. The late Bishop Jacobson, on his appointment to the See, declining to live at the old Palace, and with the sanction of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, adopted and improved the present residence, partly by a charge on the revenues of the Bishopric and partly at his own expense; and he added a private Chapel thereto, making the whole a brighter and worthier home for himself and his successors.

Behind the Palace, St. John's Church claims the visitor's attention. This fine Church is one of the lions of Chester,

and shall be fully described in a later Chapter. Passing northward between some old timber houses on the left and gardens and orchards on the other hand, the visitor finds himself over another archway in the Walls, called the **NEW GATE**. A flight of steps here leads down to **NEWGATE STREET**. This gate, or rather its predecessor, was known as the **Wolffield** or **Wolfgate**, and also **Pepper Gate**, on account of its standing at the end of **PEPPER STREET**. Tradition informs us that this Gate was "of old time closed up and shut, because a young man stole away a Mayor of Chester's daughter through the same Gate, as she was playing at ball with other maidens in **PEPPER STREET**." Albert Smith, in his "**Struggles and Adventures of Christopher Tadpole**," perpetuates this tradition, in his own happy and humorous style. *There* all who please may read of the sinful conduct of that wicked young man, and of that almost as froward and faulty young maiden, whose mutual frailties gave birth to the Cheshire proverb, "When the daughter is stolen, shut the Pepper Gate," another version of "When the steed is stolen, lock the stable door."

Before quitting the **NEW GATE**, a glance may be given to a cupola-crowned building on the right. This is the old Cockpit, a room in which many a stubborn man has been fought, and many a thousand pounds lost and won in days now happily historical. Until 1869 it had been for nine years the headquarters and drill-room of the Chester Artillery and Rifle Volunteers, and had an armoury and gymnasium attached for the use of the two corps. The original Cockpit was roofed with thatch. After a hasty glance at the **Dee House Convent** and **Chapel**, on the right, which here groups pleasingly with the **Church of St. John** behind, the visitor may continue his walk, passing the remains of an old turret, formerly known as **Thimbleby's Tower**, but why so called is not recorded. On the right, beyond this ruined turret is a group of buildings, comprising the **Wesleyan Methodist Chapel** and **School**, the **Free Public Library**, and the **Post Office**. All these buildings front **ST. JOHN STREET**. Within a short distance from the Post Office, the visitor reaches, on his left, the **Grosvenor Hotel** buildings, and a few steps further on he finds himself on the top of the **EAST GATE**, having completed the entire circuit of the Walls.



CHAPTER VI.

EASTGATE STREET AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

EASTGATE STREET—Grosvenor Club—North and South Wales Bank—Grosvenor Hotel—Corn Exchange—**NEWGATE STREET**—Parr's Bank—The Rows—Eastgate Row—Pepper Alley Row—Leading Business Premises—Eastgate Street Crypt—The High Cross—Conduit—Corporation Bull Bait.

THE visitor having completed his long and interesting walk round the Walls—a walk which no city save Chester, in Great Britain at least, can provide—he can descend by the flight of steps adjoining the EAST GATE, the same steps by which he ascended to the Walls on first setting out on his circuit, and commence his examination of the interior of the city. He passes through the small archway close to the foot of the steps and finds himself in the far famed EASTGATE STREET. The EAST GATE itself marks the termination of the ancient Roman Watling Street—the line of which is here taken by the chief of the four leading streets of the city, as planned and excavated by the soldier colonists of the once mighty Rome. This leading street is the one great highway for all passengers and conveyances to and from the Railway Station, and is for all business purposes, the main street of the city.

Immediately on the right hand, on entering EASTGATE STREET, is the Grosvenor Club, a modern building in a mediæval style, with considerable pretensions to architectural beauty. It is certainly picturesque in the general view of this end of the street. The ground floor is occupied by the Chester branch of the North and South Wales Bank. The façade of the building is richly ornamented with heraldic sculpture. The arms represented are those of the City and

County, the Grosvenor arms which appear between the windows of the first and second floors, and the arms of the twelve Counties of Wales cut on the twelve shields which are carried along the front. This building was executed from the designs of Messrs. Douglas and Minshull. Opposite is the Grosvenor Hotel, an imposing building, in a rather flat treatment of the prevailing half-timbered style of the architecture of Chester. The front is supported by a row of eight columns, and a massive angle pier, which show a decided French character in their details. The walk behind these columns is called the Grosvenor Hotel Row. Here was the site of the old White Talbot Hotel, where the assemblies and routs of the last century were usually held, but which merged its name and independent existence in the grander title of its *then*



The Old Royal Hotel.

newly built neighbour the Royal Hotel. The old Royal was taken down in 1863 to make way for the present imposing buildings, which were erected from the designs of the late Mr. T. M. Penson, architect, of Chester. His obvious attempt to carry out his work to accord with the peculiar street fronts

of the city can only be looked upon as partly successful. The Grosvenor Hotel belongs to the Duke of Westminster; and is leased by him to a prosperous company. The chief apartment is the Assembly-room, the only portion of the old Royal Hotel remaining. It is a fine apartment 68 feet long by 34 feet wide.

The view of the Royal Hotel here given is interesting from an historical point, for not a vestige of the building save the above-mentioned Assembly-room now remains.

Opposite to the Grosvenor Hotel is the Corn Exchange, erected on the site of the old *Manchester Hall*, for the accommodation of farmers attending the weekly Corn Market.

The street immediately beyond on the left, is NEWGATE STREET, anciently styled *Fleshmonger Lane*, from its having been at one time the chief place of business of the butchers. In this street is situate the Conservative Club, erected in 1898 by Mr. Yerburgh, the Member of Parliament for the City, which, beside spacious accommodation for its members, comprises a large Assembly Room available for meetings and other purposes, and also suites of offices, the whole forming a handsome brick building with stone dressings. Here, too, is situate the English Presbyterian Church.

Nearly opposite to NEWGATE STREET is ST. WERBURGH STREET, leading to the Cathedral.

This street has recently been doubled in width, and through the exertions of the Town Council, aided by the Duke of Westminster, and Mr. Hugh Lyle Smyth, Ex-High Sheriff of the County, an unsightly block of buildings was removed to make room for a new Branch of the Bank of Liverpool, erected at a cost of £7,000, and a handsome street of timber fronted shops and offices all designed by Mr. John Douglas, of Chester. At the Western corner of this street is the establishment of Parr's Banking Co.,



a building erected in 1860, unfortunately designed in a style of architecture distinctly out of place in such a street as EASTGATE STREET.

Passing the line of NEWGATE STREET, the visitor is introduced to another unique characteristic of old Chester,—its venerable and interesting Rows. The true origin of the Rows seems to be altogether undecided. As a late and still well remembered antiquarian of Chester has said:—“To account satisfactorily for the origin of these rows, is a problem which has troubled far brighter heads than ours; and, indeed, all we know in the present day is, that, in reality, we *know nothing* of their earliest history. Some writers, with exuberant fancies, have attributed to the Rows a British foundation: while others, with greater apparent reason, consider them a vestige of the dominion of Rome, and to have been by that people erected, conjointly for the purposes of recreation and defence. There are many circumstances which seem to justify this view of the case; particularly that of their resemblance to the porticoes or *vestibula* spoken of by Plautus and other Latin authors. Further, confirmatory of their Roman origin, we may add, that there is, or was, a street in old Rome, bearing a close analogy to the Rows of Chester. Taking into account also that a Roman bath and lavatory exist to this very hour under one of these Rows, the arguments in favour of their Roman creation are certainly entitled to a fair amount of weight.

“If it be difficult to arrive at the early history of these Rows, equally difficult is it to attempt to describe them to a stranger. Distrusting our own powers, we will call in the genial aid of the late Albert Smith, who, in describing the Rows of what he calls ‘this marvellous city,’ proceeds to say that the ‘passenger’s footway lies right through the first floor fronts of the houses—which are cleared away altogether, and above the shop, of ordinary normal position, by the roadside; and thus, the back drawing-rooms, or whatever else they may be, are turned into more shops; and great is the puzzle of the stranger as to whether the roadway is down in the cellar, or he is up stairs on the landing, or the house has turned itself out of window; affording a literal proof of that curious state of domestic affairs so often spoken of. ‘And first he fancies the ‘Rows’—as it is termed—is like the Quadrant, with the road excavated a floor lower, and shops made under the pavement; and then it reminds him of a Thames-

side tavern, with all the shutter wainscots, that divide the large convivial room into so many little philandering ones, drawn away, and the windows knocked out. And finally he arrives at the conclusion that there is nothing else in the world at all like it, except the prints published by the enterprising booksellers who live there. But very convenient is this arrangement for old ladies of weak minds who quail at meeting cattle; and young ladies of extravagant ones who doat on shopping, in spite of the weather. For it raises the first above suspicion even of danger; and shelters the second from being favoured with the visits of the clouds, who cannot here drop in upon them."

Another description from the pen of an American, is still more intelligible. Writing to a friend on the other side of the Atlantic, he says "The second story of most of the houses is thrown forward, as you have seen it in the old settlers' houses at home. Sometimes it projects several feet, and is supported by posts in the sidewalk. Soon this becomes a frequent and then a continuous arrangement; the posts are generally of stone, forming an arcade—and you walk beneath them in the shade. Sometimes, instead of posts, a solid wall supports the house above. You observe, as would be likely in an old city, that the surface is irregular, and that we are ascending a slight elevation. Notwithstanding the old structure overhead, and the well-worn flagging under foot, we notice the shop fronts are filled with plate glass, and with all the brilliancy of the most modern art and taste. Turning, to make the contrast more striking, by looking at the little windows and rude carvings of the houses opposite, we see a banister or handrail separates the side-walk from the carriage way, and are astonished in stepping out to it, to find the street is some ten feet below us. We are evidently on the second floor of the houses. Finding steps leading down, we descend into the street, and discover another tier of shops, on the roofs of which we have been walking!"

Whatever the origin or requirements which gave rise to this system of street architecture may be, both its convenience and picturesqueness are unquestioned: and no city in the world can show anything in this respect equal to what the visitor finds in Chester. It is much to be regretted that in years past the citizens of Chester did not combine with spirit to protect the entire system of Rows which obtained in the middle ages, and to keep them intact and altogether free from

interruption. They did not do so, and accordingly some have been stopped and otherwise broken up. It seems probable that the system was at its highest development in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; but what the true extent of the system then was, has not been recorded. In the last century Chester was generally acknowledged to be far away the most remarkable and picturesque city in England. It still, and deservedly, lays claim to that distinction; but looking back upon the last hundred years, and seeing what old Chester streets were like, when Cuitt's skilful pencil revelled in their beauties and quaintness, it is hardly possible to estimate how much has been lost in the interim by natural decay and the demands of modern business. Instead of the heavy and tasteless fronts which intrude themselves in harsh and conflicting outline along the streets, the houses and Rows of that day, dating back, most of them, to the sixteenth or early part of the seventeenth century, were beautiful to look upon,—every street a picture, every house unique. Happily, however, the citizens now recognise that there is a distinct business asset in the revival and perpetuation of the old style, as is manifested in so many of the rebuildings being now of mediæval character.

On ascending the few steps, opposite the end of the Grosvenor Hotel Row, in NEWGATE STREET, the visitor enters the chief Row of the city, called Eastgate Row, the interrupted Row on the other side of the street being designated Pepper Alley Row. On entering Eastgate Row the visitor cannot avoid being impressed with both the novelty and convenience of the architectural arrangement. In this row are the principal shops of the city. The important ones may be said to begin with the handsome shop of Messrs. Phillipson and Golder, Booksellers, Publishers, and Printers. Adjoining is an equally fine establishment, the property of Messrs. Bolland and Son, Confectioners and Bride-cake makers to the Queen. From this establishment almost every bride-cake required in the marriage ceremonies of the Royal Family has been furnished; and no house in England has the reputation for this article that Messrs. Bolland enjoy. Both the fronts of the shops just named are very ornate, and were erected from the plans of Mr. Penson, the architect of the Grosvenor Hotel. These fronts, and the Grosvenor Hotel and EAST GATE are shown in the accompanying illustration.



Eastgate Street.

The next shop, with its important classic front, is probably the most extensive business premises in the city. It belongs to Messrs. Brown and Co., Silk Mercers, Cabinet Makers, &c. Adjoining this establishment are Crypt Buildings, an imposing stone structure in the Gothic style, unhappily blocking up the view of the street from the part of the Row which passes it. This structure was also designed by Mr. Penson. The building takes its name from the ancient vaulted crypt, which still exists underneath. This crypt once occupied by Mr. Ayrton, a local antiquary, was carefully preserved from destruction, and can still be examined by the interested archaeologist. Mr. John Hewitt, in his able "Notes on the Mediæval Architecture of Chester" (*Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, Vol. I., 1887), thus describes it:—"Eastgate Street Crypt, situate under Crypt Chambers, is the third earliest vaulted chamber left in Chester, under the Rows. It must have been erected within one hundred years of the completion of the one in Bridge Street. Its proportions are very good, as also is the effect of the groining ribs. The intermediate cross and the wall ribs add much effect to the view, and altogether a greater

artistic feature is attained. The bold groining ribs spring from delicately moulded corbels, and are intersected at the apex by a continuous longitudinal rib. In the east wall is an opening, which once led to the circular staircase, giving access to the principal floor over. The entrance from the street is the best piece of archaeological evidence existing in any of the crypts, as it assists to prove any reasonable theory advanced concerning the origin of the Rows. The entrance doorway is not Early English and has been altered in no special style or early period, but the two single lancet windows are original, though portions of their arched heads are patched up with cement. The general dimensions of the Crypt are, length forty-two feet seven inches, width thirteen feet ten and a half inches, and height thirteen feet."

Further up the Row the visitor comes to two important buildings in half-timber work; one occupied by Messrs. Beckett and Co., Silkmercers. Passing two properties of no



THE CROSS CHESTER

architectural merit, he reaches two highly characteristic and ornate buildings, erected by the late Duke of Westminster and the Corporation of Chester, from the designs of the late Mr. T. M. Lockwood, architect. To form a proper idea of the architecture of Eastgate Row, the visitor must descend from the Row and pass over to the north side of EASTGATE STREET. A good general view is obtained from the Church of St. Peter, opposite the buildings just mentioned.

The Row on the north side of EASTGATE STREET is not in itself of much interest; but there are two or three half-timber buildings in its length, which are worthy of notice, notably the one at its eastern end, adjoining Parr's Bank, Limited.

When the visitor descends to the street level from the end of Eastgate Row, he is at the HIGH CROSS, and close to the spot where that sacred emblem of the faith in old time stood. This ancient landmark, which was of stone, and elaborately carved, had for centuries ornamented this part of the city, and was a relic much and deservedly prized by the citizens. The Puritans, however, on obtaining possession of the city in 1646, with their characteristic abhorrence of the beautiful, and in direct breach of the articles of surrender, demolished this "fayre crosse." These fanatics' organs of destructiveness must, beyond doubt, have been largely developed! Some fragments of the cross were picked up at the time, and hidden within the porch of St. Peter's Church hard by, where a century or so afterwards they were discovered, and now are to be seen in the Grosvenor Museum.

Near to the Cross was the Conduit, to which water was of old brought in pipes to the city from St. Giles' Well, in Boughton; and this conduit it was that, according to ancient records, was made to "run with wine" on great public and festive occasions. Here also, upon the south side of St. Peter's Church, was the Penthouse or *Pentice* of the city, where the mayor and magistrates of the old *régime* sat to administer justice with the one hand, and discuss turtle with the other. A *lean* alderman was as great a curiosity in those days, as a *fat* parish pauper would be deemed in the present. The Pentice, which, with its accessories, the Stocks, Whipping Post, and Pillory, had too long obstructed this quarter of the city, was pulled down in 1803, and its jurisdiction removed to a more commodious room in the north end of the Exchange. The whipping post and stocks have gone and left no sign; but the pillory is preserved in the Grosvenor Museum.

This locality, crowded as it must have been before the removal of these obstructions, was also annually the scene of the *Corporation Bullbait*, thus vividly described by Cowdroy, a local scribe of the last century: "The Cross is famous for being the annual scene of exhibition of that *polite play* called a *bull-bait*; where four or five of these *horned heroes* are attended by several hundred lovers of that *rational amusement*. Till within a few years, the *dramatis personæ* of this *elegant scene* included even magistracy itself, the mayor and corporation attending in their official habiliments at the Pentice windows, not only to countenance the *diversions* of the *ring*, but to participate in the sight of its *enjoyments*. A proclamation was also made by the crier of the court, with all the gravity and solemnity of an oration before a *Roman sacrifice*; the elegant composition of which runs thus, '*Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!* If any man stands within twenty yards of the *bull-ring*, let him take—what comes.' After which followed the usual public ejaculations, for 'the safety of the king and the mayor of the city'; when the *beauties* of the scene commenced, and the dogs immediately *fell to*. Here a prayer for his worship was not unreasonable, as even the ermine cloak was no security against the carcases of dead animals, with which the spectators, without distinction, were occasionally saluted." In many ancient boroughs a law formerly prevailed, that no bulls should be slaughtered for food without having been first thus baited by dogs. They loved tender beefsteaks in those days!





CHAPTER VII.

BRIDGE STREET AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

BRIDGE STREET—Mercer's Row—Blue Posts Inn and its legend—Roman Bath—St. Michael's Church—Falcon Inn—Bear and Billet Tavern—Edgar's Tavern—Old King's Head—St. Olave's Church—Gamull House—The Castle—Caesar's Tower—St. Mary's Church—Curzon Park—The Cemetery—GROSVENOR ROAD—Militia Barracks—Savings Bank—Grosvenor Museum—Church of St. Francis—WHITE FRIARS—Scotch Row—Fifteenth Century House—Old Houses—The Crypt.

LEAVING EASTGATE STREET, and turning to the south, the visitor enters BRIDGE STREET. On the east side its Row joins Eastgate Row, at the Cross, and is continued down nearly half the length of the street, terminating at St. Michael's Church, opposite the commencement of GROSVENOR ROAD. Like Eastgate Row, already described, Bridge Street Row is, on one side, a continuous line of good shops, in all of which a flourishing trade is done. This Row was in the sixteenth century distinguished by the name of the *Mercer's Row*, doubtless on account of the predominance therein of the shops of the mercers and dealers in articles of dress.

About fifty yards down this Row, in the place now occupied by a hairdresser's shop, once stood the noted "Blue Posts Inn," in connexion with which there is an amusing and apparently a well-authenticated legend or story. The incident alluded to is said to have occurred in the year 1558, and has been thus handed down. "Dr. Henry Cole, Dean of St. Paul's, was charged by Queen Mary with a commission to the Council of Ireland, which had for its object the persecution of the Irish Protestants. The doctor stopped one night here on his way to Dublin, and put up at the Blue Posts, then kept by one Elizabeth Edmunds, or as some will have it,

Mrs. Elizabeth Mottershead. In this house he was visited by the Mayor, to whom, in the course of conversation, he related his errand; in confirmation of which he took from his cloak bag a leather box, exclaiming in a tone of exultation 'Here



Bridge Street.

is what will lash the heretics of Ireland!' This announcement was caught by the landlady, who had a brother in Dublin: and while the commissioner was escorting his worship down stairs, the good woman, prompted by an affectionate regard for the safety of her brother, opened the box, took out the commission, and placed in lieu thereof a pack of cards, with the *knave of clubs* uppermost! This the doctor carefully packed up, without suspecting the transformation; nor was the deception discovered till his arrival in the presence of the lord deputy and privy council at the castle of Dublin. The surprise of the whole assembly, on opening the supposed commission, may be more easily imagined than described. The doctor, in short, was immediately sent back by the council for a more satisfactory authority; but before he could return to Ireland, Mary had breathed her last. It should be added that the ingenuity and affectionate zeal of the landlady were rewarded by Queen Elizabeth with a pension of £40 a year."

As has already been stated in our Chapter on the Roman Antiquities of Chester, the most important remains of Roman works have been discovered in the neighbourhood of BRIDGE STREET.



Old Houses, Bridge Street.

If the visitor will descend by one of the stairways which connect the Row with the street below, and walk along the east pavement until he comes nearly opposite PIERPOINT LANE, which is on the west side of the street, he will come to a small shop, through which, on paying a small fee, he can pass to examine the remains of a Roman Bath and Hypocaust. These Roman antiquities and others discovered in BRIDGE STREET, are mentioned at some length in our Second Chapter.

With the exception of the elaborate modern frontage to Messrs. D. Sherratt and Co.'s Galleries, the architecture on the east side of the street is of little interest or importance. The frontage alluded to, an effective composition, perhaps rather over-loaded with ornament, will doubtless be much admired by the visitor who may not have very critical eyes, or be possessed of any decided architectural bias.

Reaching the end of Bridge Street Row, the visitor passes through the Tower of the Church of St. Michael. A church existed here in connexion with a Monastery of the same name shortly after the Norman Conquest. In the year 1178, John de Lacy, Constable of Chester, whose ancestor Roger de Lacy had devised the Monastery of St. Michael to the Prior of Norton, gave a messuage adjoining this church to the Abbot of Stanlaw. On Mid-lent Sunday, 1180, the church and monastery were, along with a portion of the city, destroyed by fire. The conflagration must have been of very alarming proportions, for the poet monk, Bradshaw, assures his readers that it was alone on the great virtues attaching to the holy shrine of St. Werburgh, that the fire was prevented from laying the entire city in ashes. How the great virtues of the holy shrine were applied he does not tell us. The monastery does not appear to have been rebuilt, but the church is often mentioned in later charters and deeds. The church has several times been rebuilt—the last time in 1850, from the designs of the late Mr. James Harrison, architect, of Chester. Considering the time in which the church was designed, it is a very creditable piece of work. The study of Gothic architecture has made great strides in the last forty years.

The visitor should now continue his walk southward into the lower portion of BRIDGE STREET, passing on the left an interesting old house dated 1606, and one of the oldest houses in Chester, and terminated by the BRIDGE GATE, over which he has already passed in his walk round the Walls. Close to the BRIDGE GATE is the "Bear and Billet," a grand mansion of about the middle of the seventeenth century. This belonged to the Earls of Shrewsbury until the year 1867. This remarkable specimen of half-timber architecture appears to have been erected in the year 1664. While the Talbot family were Sergeants of the adjoining Gate, a suite of rooms was always reserved in this house for the use of the members of the family whenever they visited Chester to assert their ancient rights. This house was much frequented by travellers during the good old coaching days. This old mansion is well worthy of the visitor's careful inspection, for England contains few better examples of its ancient woodwork. A little higher up, on the same side of the street, at the corner of SHIPGATE STREET—so called from its being the street which led to the ancient Ship Gate, and

thence to the mooring place for ships when the river Dee flowed up to the Walls of the City—is a quaint and picturesque old house, known as "Edgar's Tavern." On its façade to SHIPGATE STREET is a painting in which the Saxon King Edgar is depicted in a vessel rowed on the Dee by the eight tributary British Chieftains, as mentioned in our Historical Chapter.

Higher up BRIDGE STREET, at the corner of CASTLE STREET, is the "Old King's Head," the exterior of which presents a well preserved specimen of Elizabethan architecture. Internally the building has been so much altered, that nothing of antiquarian interest remains. On the opposite side of BRIDGE STREET is St. Olave's Church, a very small structure built on a rock. This church—or rather its predecessor—dates back beyond the Conquest. The advowson in the eleventh century was vested in the Botelers or Butlers; from whom it passed by gift of Richard Pincerna, in 1101, to the Abbey of St. Werburgh. St. Olave's appears to have been always "in low water," a *starving* rather than a *living*; for in 1393, on account of its poverty, the parish was temporarily united with St. Mary's. Down to the seventeenth century, however, it eked out a precarious existence; but after the close of the Civil War the ordinary services of the church were discontinued for about a century, when they were again resumed until the final extinction of St. Olave's as a distinct parish in 1841. In that year the church was finally closed, and the parish united to that of St. Michael. The authorities were fast allowing this ancient structure to turn into a ruin, until the Rev. J. F. Hewson, the officiating minister, raised the necessary funds to convert it, in 1858, with the sanction of the bishop, into the parochial Sunday School. There are some ancient remains adjoining this church, which appear to have formed portions of monastic buildings; but neither these nor the church itself are of any special interest to the visitor, so after a hasty survey, he may pass on to more important objects.

In approaching CASTLE STREET, the visitor has passed a very interesting building, called "Gamull House." This was in the seventeenth century the mansion-house of the Gamulls, a worthy Cheshire family; and here, on September 24, 1645, Sir Francis Gamull (Mayor of Chester in 1634) lodged and entertained Charles I. on His Majesty's second



Combermere Statue and Castle Entrance.

visit to Chester during the great Civil War. The house is now divided into tenements, but several of the rooms still retain evidence of their former grandeur.

If the visitor will now go up CASTLE STREET he will come to the Castle of Chester. The buildings which form the Grand Entrance and which surround the large Court Yard, were erected from the designs of the late Mr. Thomas Harrison, the engineer of the adjoining Grosvenor Bridge. The Equestrian Statue which stands in front of the Grand Entrance, is that of Field Marshal Viscount Combermere, G.C.B., a hero Cheshire has reason to be proud of. This admirable work is in bronze, executed by Baron Marochetti, at the cost of £6,000, subscribed by the inhabitants of the County. The gallant soldier is seated on an admirably modelled horse, and is represented in the act of giving the military salute. The height of the entire monument is about twenty-four feet. On the front of the pedestal is inscribed:—

ERECTED IN HONOUR OF
 STAPLETON COTTON, VISCOUNT COMBERMERE,
 FIELD MARSHAL.
 BORN 1773. DIED 1865.

The sides of the pedestal bear the list of the great battles in which he was engaged.

The Gateway is a rather imposing structure, consisting of a massive entablature and attic, supported on twelve columns of the Grecian Doric Order, and flanked by two lesser, temple-like structures. Stretching from these are curved stone walls, surmounted by piers and iron railings. The wall towards the north-east has a fosse in front of it: on the other side of the Gateway the land falls naturally. On entering the Court Yard, the visitor sees three imposing blocks of buildings enclosing the further portion of the space on three sides. The long building directly opposite the entrance, with its portico of monolithic Doric columns, contains in the centre the Shire Hall. The interior of this hall is semi-circular in plan, and round the hemicycle is a colonnade of twelve Ionic columns, also monolithic. These support an entablature from which rises a semi-dome, boldly coffered. This Hall is used as the Criminal Court, and is fitted up with all the necessary features. The arrangement of the fittings, including the bench, the seats for the juries, the prisoners' dock, witness box, counsellor's seats, and the seats for the public, is such that about one thousand spectators can be accommodated, and have a perfect view of everything that goes on, and hear every word which passes during the trials. The Nisi Prius Court, constructed from the plans of Mr. Lockwood, is also conveniently arranged.

On the south-western side of the Court Yard are the Armoury and Officers' Apartments. The former contained, prior to the Fenian raid in 1867, about 30 thousand stand of arms; they were removed for safety to the Tower of London. This is the dépôt for the arms furnished to regiments in Chester and the country for a considerable distance round the city. On the eastern side, the building is chiefly devoted to barracks, devised to accommodate a hundred and twenty men and a complement of officers. Both these buildings are designed to harmonise with the central block. Their façades are ornamented with ten attached Ionic columns, surmounted with plain entablatures and attics which completely hide the roofs.

Towards the south-west, and beyond the Armoury, stand remains of the ancient Castle, the most noteworthy portion of which is that known as "Julius Cæsar's Tower." This work has been attributed to Agricola; but there is absolutely no

more reason in associating his name with it than the name of Julius Cæsar. In the upper portion of this tower is a chapel which formerly contained a curious fresco of the Giving of the Law to Moses, but scarcely a trace now remains. It was in this chapel that King James II. received the Sacrament during his stay in Chester. The chapel was called the Chantry of St. Mary *infra Castrum*. The tower was cased with red stone in the year 1818. Adjoining this stood, prior to their demolition, the ancient Shire Hall and Exchequer Court; the latter was the Parliament house of the Palatine earls, and contained neatly carved seats for the earl and eight barons, spiritual and temporal.

Towards the north-east stands the interesting Church of St. Mary. This is in all probability of Norman foundation, and is in old writings termed indifferently "St. Mary's of the Castle," and "St. Mary's upon the hill," to distinguish it from the Church of the White Friars, which was also dedicated to St. Mary. Randle Gernons, fourth Earl of Chester, presented the advowson to the Monastery of St. Werburgh; but shortly after the Dissolution it was wrested from the dean and chapter by that rapacious spoiler of churches and religious houses, Sir R. Cotton, who afterwards sold it for one hundred pounds to John Brereton, of Wettenhall. In this family it remained for about a century, when it passed by purchase to the Wilbrahams, of Dorfold. From them it passed by marriage to the Hills, of Hough, whose representative sold it to Robert, first Marquess of Westminster. Of no great external beauty, with, prior to 1861, a tower of miserably stunted proportions—so built in 1715, by special order of the Government, that it might not overlook the Castle—the Church is still well worth a visit. Much is due to a previous Rector, the Rev. W. H. Massie, who found the interior choked up with galleries of hideous shape and size, disfigured with pews or unsightly construction, the walls and ceiling hidden in plaster, whitewash, and dirt, and the windows and monuments alike in a sad state of neglect and decay, and did much to restore the Church again to decency and order.

The Church consists of a nave with lateral aisles, and a spacious chancel, flanked with the St. Catherine's and the Troutbeck Chapels. The monuments within the Church are of considerable interest. One in the north aisle, profusely ornamented with the heraldic devices, is to the imperishable

memory of the four Randle Holmes, local antiquaries and heralds of considerable note, whose united Cheshire collections fill more than 250 MS. volumes in the British Museum. The third Randle was the author of that extraordinary and scarce heraldic work,—the "Academy of Armory," published in 1688. An elegant modern brass, and two altar tombs of curious workmanship, adorn St. Catherine's Chapel, at the end of the aisle. One of the latter remembers Thomas Gamull, Recorder of Chester in 1613, son of Edmund Gamull, aforesight Mayor of Chester, and father of the celebrated royalist Sir Francis Gamull, who suffered sequestration of his estates during the Usurpation. The recumbent figures of the Recorder and his wife Alice appear upon the tomb: and at the feet of the lady kneels their infant son, afterwards the loyal Sir Francis Gamull. Their three infant daughters, holding skulls in their hands, and two elaborate shields of arms, ornament the side of the tomb. An adjoining tomb bears the half-recumbent effigy of Philip Oldfield of Bradwall, dressed in the costume of the period, with a long gown and ruff, and a roll in his left hand. The figures of his four sons, each bearing a shield of arms, support the slab on which he leans, and between them a painted skeleton, in a similar attitude to the effigy, appears on the side of the tomb. Two daughters kneel at his head, and these also bear impaled shields, in token of their marriage. Both these monuments are deserving the attention of the curious.

On the wall at the entrance to the Troutbeck Chapel was discovered, some years ago, remains of an ancient mural painting, representing the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, in curious juxtaposition with the figures of a king and a bishop, and the "red and white roses of York and Lancaster." There were several beautiful monuments in the Troutbeck aisle, but unfortunately these were destroyed by the falling in of the roof in 1660.

The modern stained glass, although not to be commended from an artistic point of view, is just worth notice in its memorial character. The east window on the north of the chancel is a memorial of high national interest. Erected by public subscription, this window commemorates the glorious deeds of the gallant 23rd Regiment (Royal Welsh Fusiliers) at the battles of Alma, Inkerman, and Sebastopol, in 1854-5. The 23rd is a regiment highly esteemed by the Cestrians, nay, is almost regarded by them as their own kith

and kin: and most of those brave spirits, officers and men, who nobly fell "with their faces to the foe" on those hard-won fields, had but a few months before regularly attended Divine service at St. Mary's church. The subject represented in the window is "Aaron and Hur holding up the hands of Moses," while the patriarch blesses the fighting hosts of Israel; for as we read in Exodus xvii. ver. 11, 12, "Moses' hands were heavy, and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other; for it came to pass, that when Moses held up his hands Israel prevailed, and when his hands fell down, Amalek prevailed." This is certainly an appropriate subject for such a memorial, from an Old Testament point of view. It is worthy of note that in the tracery of the windows in the Troutbeck Chapel are to be found the only ancient glass in any Church in the city. It is of early sixteenth century date, and is rich in colour and elegant in design.

In the year 1887, the boundaries of the parish were altered on the consecration of the new Church of St. Mary without the Walls, in Handbridge, and the old Church was included in the parish of St. Bridget with St. Martin. In 1891, the Church underwent restoration, and by a faculty decreed in the Consistory Court, was constituted the Parish Church of these united parishes. The work of restoration was carried out under the superintendence of the late Mr. J. P. Seddon, F.R.I.B.A., of Westminster, and consisted mainly of the re-casing of the north side, the demolition of the galleries, the re-flooring of the Church, the rebuilding of two faulty columns and the south clerestory, with many other necessary works. The builders were Messrs. Pattinson, of Rushington, Lincolnshire, and the expenditure some £4,000. A porch, to the memory of Randle Holme, a noted Chester Antiquary, was erected in 1894 by the Freemasons of Cheshire. The aisles are separated from the nave by low Tudor arches. The beautiful Tudor roof of the Nave, brought to the Church from Basingwerk Abbey in 1535, has recently been rescued from decay and carefully restored. The visitor will not regret an hour spent within and around the church.

Returning to GROSVENOR ROAD, the visitor may either direct his steps towards the Grosvenor Bridge, which spans the Dee a short distance south-west of the Castle entrance, and so gain a good view of the Dee and the suburb of Curzon Park, and pay a visit to the Cemetery adjoining, or he may direct his steps towards BRIDGE STREET, without further delay.

As we have already described the Grosvenor Bridge, we may conduct the visitor citywards.

The first buildings which meet his eye on the left are the Barracks, which were erected in 1858, from the plans of Messrs. Penson and Ritchie. On the opposite side of GROSVENOR ROAD stands the Chester Savings Bank, a pleasing structure erected in 1853, from the designs of the late Mr. James Harrison. The style of architecture is late Pointed, or that commonly called Tudor; and the general treatment is highly creditable to the architect and the time in which it was erected. The ordinary business of the Bank is transacted in two spacious rooms on the ground floor. The Bank was formally transferred to these convenient premises from Goss Street in 1853. Here the poor and thrifty hoard up their little savings; shillings carefully gathered grow into pounds, and provision is thus surely made against the "rainy day." Wrexham, Holywell, and Frodsham Savings Banks have recently been amalgamated with Chester. The Bank under able management is in a most flourishing condition.

The visitor now comes to one of the most interesting institutions of modern Chester, the Grosvenor Museum. This handsome structure was opened in 1886, being built from the plans of Mr. T. M. Lockwood, to meet the requirements of the Chester Archaeological and Historical Society, the Chester Society of Natural Science, founded by Chas. Kingsley in the year 1871, and the Science and Art and Technical Schools. The building cost over £19,000; which sum was raised by public subscription, the late Duke of Westminster contributing the handsome sum of over £5,000, and also portion of the site on which the Museum stands. The management of the institution was undertaken by a committee elected annually from the members of the two societies and the managers of the schools above mentioned, but is now transferred to the City Council.

The portions of the Museum open to the visitor are the rooms containing the archaeological and natural history collections, and the Art Gallery. These are open every day throughout the year, except on Sundays, Good Friday, and Christmas Day. The admission on five days of the week is threepence for each person; but on all Wednesdays the entrance is free. To the members of the two societies, and the subscribers and students of the schools, the building is open free.



Grosvenor Museum.

The visitor should certainly spare time to inspect the collections preserved in this institution, for he will find therein the interesting series of Roman altars and other objects discovered from time to time in Chester, and to which we have specially alluded in our Chapter on Roman Antiquities. Many other objects of historical and archaeological interest are here displayed for his inspection; including three of the curious Scolds' Bridles or Branks. These were resorted to in the "good old times" to curb the angry tongues of objectionably loquacious dames. Here also may be seen the Pillory and High Cross, which once stood at the Cross, opposite St. Peter's Church.

The Natural History Museum contains a fine and well preserved collection of specimens of the fauna, flora, and geology of the district. The life histories of birds, preserved and arranged by Mr. R. Newstead, F.E.S., are worthy of special attention. The Educational Department is admirably conducted, and is in a most satisfactory condition, both as regards teachers and the attendance of pupils. There is an admirable Lecture Theatre connected with the building, in which the meetings of the Societies are held. Altogether, the institution is highly creditable to the citizens of Chester.

Opposite the Museum stands the modern Monastery and Church of St. Francis, erected in 1862.

A few steps bring the visitor once more into BRIDGE STREET, at a point opposite to St. Michael's Church.

If the visitor will turn to the right and go southward a few steps, he will arrive at the corner of LITTLE CUPPIN STREET, where stands one of the most interesting of the old houses in Chester. This is known as the Falcon Inn or Cocoa House. This building was erected at the end of the sixteenth century, although it seems almost certain to have been a rebuilding of an earlier edifice, and to have been a copy of it in all essential features. The arrangement of the steps which lead to the first floor, under a massive stone arch, which seems to be older than the rest of the building, is unique in Chester. The Falcon Inn was some years ago carefully restored, at the expense of the late Duke of Westminster, and is well worthy of a careful inspection.

Having already conducted the visitor down the eastern side of BRIDGE STREET, we shall now direct his attention to the chief objects of interest on the western side. The first street he comes to on his left is WHITE FRIARS, so called because in it originally stood the Church and Friary of the Carmelites. This street deserves a hasty survey, for on its left side will be seen an old house, the upper part of which projects over the pavement, and is supported on brackets of wood. This is a characteristic specimen of the ancient timber buildings of Chester. It was during the course of some excavations made in this street in May, 1884, that important remains of a Roman building were discovered. These were chiefly in the form of broken columns and bases of considerable size, indicating the site of a building of a public character. A tablet over a doorway facing Bolland's

Court, a little further on, records this discovery in the following words:—

“In this spot, at the depth of seven feet, were found in the month of May, 1884, a basement and columns of a Roman building, which extended from east to west, together with tiles of the Twentieth Legion, and coins, etc., above them three feet higher an encaustic tile-floor, presumed to have belonged to the Carmelite Church of St. Mary.”

All that now remains of the monastic buildings of the Carmelites is a doorway; this is in the old mansion called the Friars, appropriated, in these matter-of-fact times, as solicitors' chambers. In a garden in Bolland's Court on the same side of the street still stands a summer house where Matthew Henry wrote his *Commentary on the Bible*. Prior to the end of the sixteenth century a fine church, dedicated to St. Mary, stood in **WHITE FRIARS**. It is said to have had a lofty spire, which served as a land-mark for vessels approaching the city.

Near **WHITE FRIARS** the Rows commence on the western side of **BRIDGE STREET**, and are only interrupted between here and the Cross by **PIERPOINT LANE** and **COMMONHALL STREET**. The portion of Rows between the latter street and **WATERGATE STREET**, used to be known as the “*Scotch Row*,” from the practice of the merchants from north of the Tweed clanning together there during the two great Fairs, held annually in Chester from time out of all memory. It should be remembered that, except at these privileged Fairs, none but freemen were permitted to trade within the city. Such a restriction naturally caused a considerable gathering of tradesmen from different parts of the country on these occasions. Since the downfall of this monopoly, the *Scotch Row* has become deserted, so far as active business is concerned. Notwithstanding this, the visitor should on no account omit ascending and inspecting this Row, which conveniently conducts him into the still more important and interesting Row in **WATERGATE STREET**.

The buildings along the west side of **BRIDGE STREET** are more interesting and strikingly picturesque than those on the other side. In the centre of the view are shown a large three-gabled building, with a projecting portion of two stories supported, in advance of the shops below and the Row, on four strong wooden brackets. These were once important residences, and are striking architectural features in the

general view of the street. Hemingway, alluding to the buildings in this street, says:—"The original plan of the houses (if there was any plan at all) seems to have been the cottage style, with the gable end of each to face the street. This mode of building certainly gives great extent of premises behind, but renders the inner rooms and staircases rather dark."

The block of buildings at the corner of BRIDGE STREET and WATERGATE STREET is a notable addition to the street architecture of the City, the stone arches over the row and the brick and stonework generally making a pleasing diversion from the usual style of row architecture. The flanking of each end of the block with half-timbered gables gives a pretty effect in this most important part and centre of the city.

The visitor should not close his survey of BRIDGE STREET without paying a visit to the interesting Crypt, which is attached to one of the houses just mentioned. The shop which is practically the entrance to the Crypt, is called "Ye old Crypt." Prior to 1839, no special archaeological interest attached to this locality; but in that year, while excavating for a warehouse behind the shop of Mr. J. E. Newman, Ironmonger, a discovery was made which at once set all the antiquaries of Chester in a state of excitement. The late Rev. J. Eaton, Precentor of the Cathedral, an antiquarian authority in his day, made the following Report upon this "Old Crypt," as it is called, for the use of the proprietors. To these gentlemen—and particularly to the present owner of the property—the public are deeply indebted for having preserved to this day so interesting a relic of Mediæval Chester, and for so courteously permitting visitors to inspect the structure. The Report says:—

"The lower parts of several of the houses in the four principal streets of Chester exhibit indubitable signs that they have been built on the remains of the religious buildings with which, prior to the Reformation, this city abounded.

"This ancient Crypt discovered by Messrs. Powell and Edwards is of an oblong form, running from east to west. The following are its dimensions, viz.:—length, forty-two feet; breadth, fifteen feet three inches; height, from the surface of the floor to the intersection of the groinings of the roof, fourteen feet. This Crypt was partially lighted through the upper part of the west end, in which there are

three small windows, divided by stone mullions, and protected by iron bars. The upper part of the groining on the centre window appears to have been cut away to admit of more light. On examining the groins, marks were discovered on the stonework, showing that a couple of lamps had been used for lighting. The entrance to the east end is by a flight of steps cut out of the rock to the height of three feet. On the south side is a Gothic doorway, which is attained by three or four semi-circular steps, and forms an outlet within its inner and outer wall by another flight of steps to the surface above the building. In a niche on the south side of the window is a sculptured stone, probably a font, in excellent preservation."

The architecture would appear to be of about the end of the twelfth, or early part of the thirteenth century; probably, if we date this Crypt as being erected about the year 1230, we shall not be far from the era of its construction.

There has been a very decided opinion amongst certain archæologists that this Crypt was a Chapel of some sort. For instance, Dr. Rock, the well known authority on ecclesiastical art, has stated that it was "a mortuary chapel, not for the secret celebration of religious services, but probably a sort of private oratory." Notwithstanding such high authority, we are strongly of opinion that the Crypt was simply a cellar belonging to an ordinary house. In this opinion we agree with Mr. John Hewitt, whose exhaustive description of this Crypt, in its present state, we venture to quote:—

"The oldest Crypt is situate in Bridge Street, occupied by Mr. Newman. The front wall stands about eighteen yards from the line of the street, and the internal dimensions are, length, forty-two feet six inches, width, fifteen feet three inches, and height, fourteen feet six inches from the present floor line to top of groining ribs. The vaulting is finished with groining, divided into six bays, which are formed by plain splayed ribs springing from semi-coned corbels of plain character, the vaulting consisting of small stones similar to the general work in Early English erections. In its original state this crypt would be but ten feet only in full height, with the floor about two feet six inches below the line of the street; but at a subsequent date the owners have deepened the apartment some four feet by excavating in the rock, and lowering the floor to its present level. When performing this, to

provide access to the staircase, the circular-shaped steps, now in the crypt, were shaped out of the natural rock, which still retains its 'life,' or moisture. This alteration must have taken place whilst the old staircase was still in use, otherwise the additional steps would be useless. The staircase, just referred to, consists of stone steps leading to the kitchen above, the winders at the top having a turn to the right hand, so as to land directly over the crypt. Under one of these steps, now removed, is a cavity twelve inches long, six inches wide, and seven inches deep, evidently formed for the purpose of concealing treasures or money, for the preservation of which the hole has been lined and covered with oak. When discovered, some years ago, the finder of this was unable to meet with the reward of 'treasure trove,' as the aperture was quite empty. This is rather unfortunate, as substantial evidence is yet required to complete the history of even the crypts of Chester. This crypt is lighted by a triple lancet window of bold character, having transom; the jambs and mullions are of massive proportions, having deep splays, and the sill is about two feet above the original floor level. On either side of this window two apertures are formed in the walls, being almost square in height, width, and depth, which were used as cupboards, indications of the hinges being still visible. These cupboards are at such a level, relative to the present floor, as to be useless, having been formed for use prior to the lowering of the crypt floor. The small door to the staircase is an interesting piece of Early English work, having a beautiful trefoiled head; the opening is six feet three inches high, and two feet three inches wide, and approached by the subsequently formed circular steps already mentioned. At the end of the Crypt where the entrance now is, is a stone screen, with doorway and two windows, erected in 1839. This screen forms part of the thicker wall above it, which has a two-centred and chamfered arch, also modern. Though the crypt is damp and dismal now, owing to the extra excavation, its former state must have been much brighter before the window was obscured by modern work."—*Journal of the Chester Archaeological and Historic Society*, 1887, p. 46.





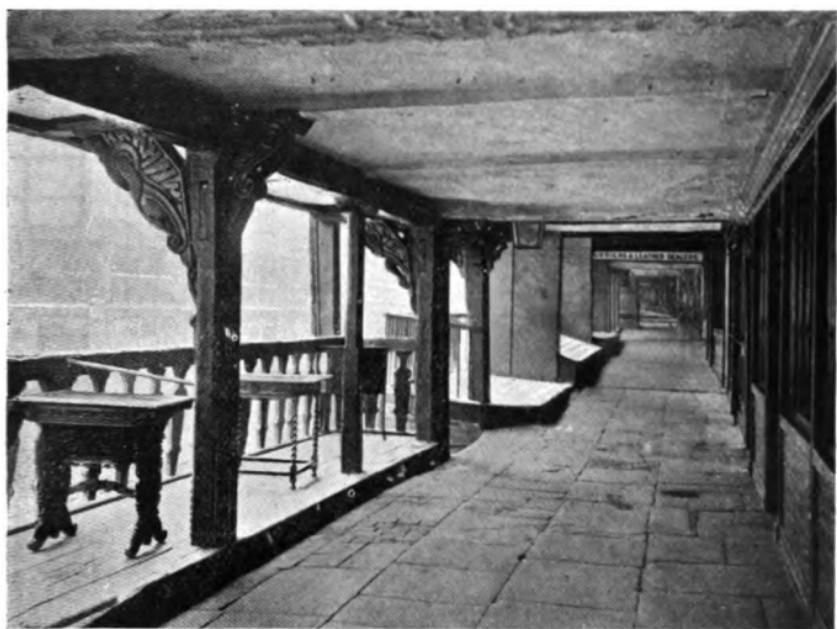
CHAPTER VIII.

WATERGATE STREET AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

WATERGATE STREET—The Rows—God's Providence House—Watergate Street Crypt—Bishop Lloyd's House—PUPPET SHOW ENTRY—**WEAVER STREET**—**NICHOLAS STREET**—The Yacht Inn—Stanley Palace—Linen Hall—Trinity Church—**TRINITY STREET**—Matthew Henry's Chapel—Chester Goldsmiths' Hall—St. Peter's Church.

HAVING completed his survey of BRIDGE STREET and its objects of interest, the visitor should now enter WATERGATE STREET, which is in ancient architectural remains and antiquarian matters generally the most interesting street in the city. When Chester was a thriving port, WATERGATE STREET was the chief street, but now its importance is, like the maritime importance of Chester, a thing of the past. To this fact may be attributed the retention of so much that belongs to by-gone times. To the lover of quaint architecture, and curious old nooks and corners, this street presents a "happy hunting ground." For a considerable portion at its eastern end, it has Rows on both sides, in this respect resembling the two main streets already described. If the visitor enters the long Row, on the south side of the street, which communicates with the Scotch Row, he will see before him the most perfect specimen of this peculiar system of building in all Chester. This Row has perhaps retained as much of its original character as any other in Chester, as may be realised from the accompanying illustration, which shows an interesting portion of its length. The Row on the north side of the street is also a good example of the old treatment, having been very little modified from what it was in the last century. The visitor should certainly examine both the Rows; and view the old houses from the elevated position they afford him.

The first building deserving special notice is situated a short distance down on the south or left hand side. It is the celebrated structure known as "God's Providence House,"



Watergate Street Row.

originally erected in 1652. The front as it now appears is a modern restoration of the original one. There can be no doubt that this house belonged to a family of some consequence, for a coat of arms ornaments the beam under the upper window. On the main beam under the gable is the inscription :—

GOD'S . PROVIDENCE . IS . MINE . INHERITANCE.

and it is from this pious sentence that the house derives its name. It is by no means certain for what reason such an inscription was placed in so prominent a position, for it was not the custom of the old Cestrians to so distinguish their houses. According to the popular belief, the inscription was added after the plague which ravaged the city during the seventeenth century. Tradition says that this was the only dwelling in WATERGATE STREET which the plague passed over : and in gratitude for that remarkable deliverance, the owner had the inscription carved on the main beam. The general design of the front is very simple ; the feeling of richness it presents is due to the relief ornamentation in the spaces between the wood framing.

The fourth property from God's Providence House is an old building, formerly the City abode of the Leche family, an important residence as is clearly indicated by some interesting remains which exist inside. There is a lofty hall, some

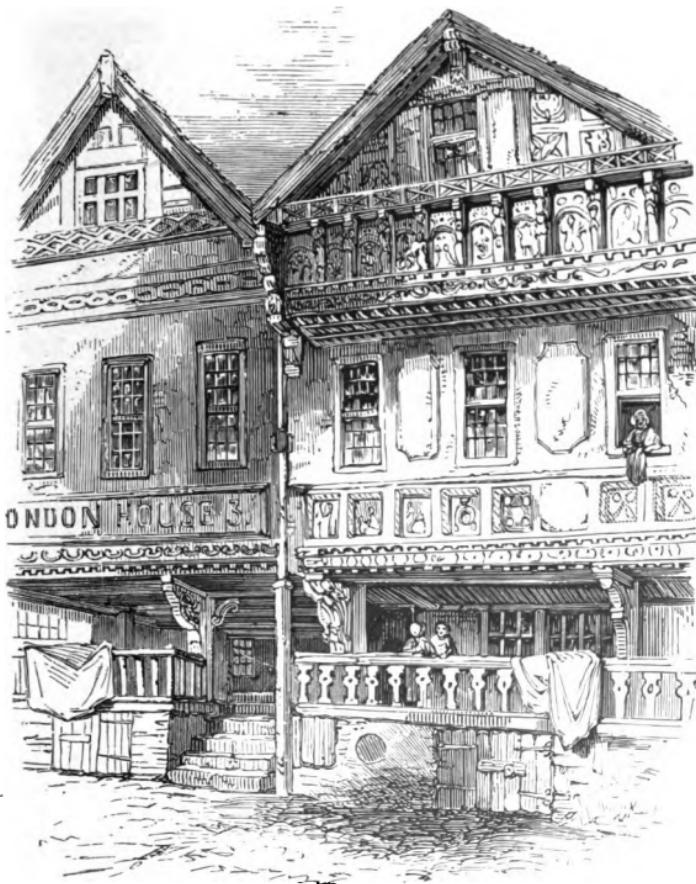


God's Providence House.

fireplaces, and panelling and carved work, which could only have been introduced in a house of importance.

Near here are the premises belonging to Messrs. Quellyn Roberts and Co., Wine Merchants, connected with which is the most perfect and interesting mediæval crypt or vaulted cellar in Chester. This relic of Mediæval Chester can be seen by the visitors at any hour of the day. The crypt dates about the time of Henry III., and, accordingly, belongs to

the latter half of the thirteenth century. It is of Early Middle Pointed architecture. As a specimen of this period it is extremely interesting; and is now the only crypt in Chester which has its vaulting carried on a central row of pillars. The proportions of the structure are good, and the general effect of the interior is very striking. The dimensions are, length, forty-four feet; width, twenty-two feet; height, eleven feet. It is entered at the end towards the street, through arches pierced in the original external wall. It was originally entered from the house above by the small pointed door in the south wall. The central pillars are octagonal, and have moulded capitals and angle-stopped bases,



Bishop Lloyd's House.

indicative of the Early Middle Pointed period. The wall shafts are semi-circular and have similar capitals and bases. The plain splayed ribs spring gracefully from the capitals: from each of the octagonal pillars spring eight ribs. There are three cupboards in this crypt, one still holding one of its hinges. We may mention that the crypt discovered in Eastgate Street, and now unfortunately destroyed, had also a central row of pillars.

Lower down WATERGATE STREET, and almost opposite CROOK STREET, where the north Row ends, stands one of the most remarkable of the old houses in Chester, and one which, perhaps, has no parallel in Great Britain. Prout has rendered this building celebrated by representing it in one of his masterly drawings; a rough idea of which is given in the accompanying cut.

This building is commonly called "Bishop Lloyd's House," but the reason why seems somewhat doubtful. The date, 1615, and a coat of arms carved on the front panels seem to favour the idea, for Bishop Lloyd lived up to this date, and the coat of arms resembles that belonging to his family. Some others of the panels contain curious carvings of Scripture subjects. In the first panel Adam and Eve appear in a state of sinless nudity: probably this subject represents the Fall. The second subject is Cain slaying Abel. The third subject is Abraham offering up his Son. The following three panels contain the arms of the reigning monarch, James I., the supposed arms of Bishop Lloyd, and a Latin inscription, with the date 1615. Then, in the seventh panel is a composition over which there has been some difference of opinion, so we shall allow the visitor to form his own idea on the subject. The eighth panel, according to a late local archaeologist, "symbolises the completion of the great sacrifice, the Crucifixion of Christ, in Simeon's prophecy to the Virgin,—'Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own heart also.' " The upper portion of the gable is likewise elaborately ornamented: and the supports and brackets are carved in a curious manner. The three windows of the front, light a fine apartment, richly ornamented. If the visitor will go up an adjoining entry he will find another apartment which originally belonged to the house, and which will repay an inspection.

A few steps lower down the Row is a passage or alley, communicating with COMMON HALL STREET, called PUPPET SHOW ENTRY. This passage is memorable as the scene of a

terrific explosion, which shook the old city like an earthquake, on the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot, November 5th, 1772. A large room in this passage was fitted up as a sort of Marionette Theatre, a large audience had assembled, the puppets were going through their mimic evolutions, when, by some appalling misfortune or carelessness, eight hundred pounds of gunpowder, stored in a warehouse beneath the room, suddenly exploded with terrific force, wrecking the premises, killing the showman and twenty-two other persons, and injuring eighty-three of the audience. In remembrance of that fearful calamity, this passage was for 130 years called PUPPET SHOW ENTRY, but recently to the regret of all antiquarians it has been re-named CRYPT COURT.

When the visitor has examined all the old houses in the extent of the Row, on the south side of the street, he may move down the street towards the WATER GATE, which terminates it westward. The first street he will come to on this side is WEAVER STREET, anciently called *St. Alban's Lane*, leading to the site of the Monastery and Church of the White Friars. Of this monastic establishment only the very uninteresting fragment of a wall remains. The next street is NICHOLAS STREET, at the corner of which is the ancient hostelry, the Yacht Inn. This was, perhaps, the most picturesque of all the Chester inns. At one time it was the first hotel of the city, but its honourable position has long gone from it. Visitors who love the ancient and the quaint, should not overlook this curious old building. It was at this house, then in its flourishing state, that the eccentric and witty Dean Swift—the author of “Gulliver's Travels”—stayed, on one of his journeys to Ireland. The Dean being of a convivial turn, invited the dignitaries of the Cathedral to sup with him at the Yacht, but to his great mortification not one responded to his invitation. Disgusted at this return for his hospitable intentions, the Dean scratched with his diamond ring on one of the windows of the house the following characteristic lines, not over complimentary to the Church or the City:—

“Rotten without and mouldering within,
The place and its clergy are all near akin!”

NICHOLAS STREET leads to the Castle, and from it run GREY FRIARS and BLACK FRIARS, towards the Walls, and WHITE FRIARS, towards BRIDGE STREET.

Passing the end of NICHOLAS STREET, the visitor comes to a small and altogether insignificant entry or passage.

This, however, leads to a small court, along the west side of which stands the ancient Palace of the Stanleys, now sadly fallen from its original uses. This mansion was the city residence of the Stanleys of Alderley, a family of note in the County and now ennobled. This was the residence in which the unfortunate Earl of Derby may have resided some time before his execution at Bolton, in 1657. "Mr. Bagaley, one of



Part of the Old Palace of the Stanley Family.

his gentlemen, attended him at his dying hour, and thus speaks of one Lieutenant Smith, a rude fellow, with his hat on:— He told my Lord he came from Colonel Duckenfield, the governor, to tell his lordship he must be ready for his journey

to Bolton. My Lord replied, 'When would he have me to go?' 'To-morrow, about six in the morning,' said Smith. 'Well,' said my Lord, 'Commend me to the governor, and tell him I shall be ready by that time.' Then said Smith, 'Doth your lordship know any friend or servant that would do the thing your lordship knows of? It would do well if you had a friend.' My Lord replied, 'What do you mean, to cut off my head?' Smith said, 'Yes, my Lord, if you could have a friend.' My Lord said, 'Nay, sir, if those men that would have my head will not find one to cut it off, let it stand where it is!'"

The portion of the Palace remaining presents three gables towards the court; and these are beautifully designed and extremely well carved and ornamented. It was erected in 1591, as is shown by the date carved on one of the pillars, and is unquestionably the oldest really good specimen of timber architecture in Chester. The sombre dignity of its exterior pervades also the internal construction of the mansion—the large rooms with panelled walls and oaken floors, and the massive staircase, pointing out the taste and wealth of its original owners. In the year 1866 this interesting building was in danger of being destroyed, but the Chester Archaeological Society purchased it and so preserved it, and subsequently were the means of restoring it to the Derby family, in whose possession it now remains.

A little further on, and the visitor again comes to the WATER GATE; but as he has already visited it during his tour round the Walls, and from it, the Roodeye, it is unnecessary to pause before the examination of the north side of WATERGATE STREET is undertaken.

The chief object of interest, as the visitor ascends WATERGATE STREET, is the Parish Church, dedicated to the Holy and Undivided Trinity. The foundation of the earliest Church on this site has not been recorded; but so early as the year 1188 we find Walter, the Rector of this Church, witnessing a deed relating to the Church of Rostherne, in this County. The old structure had little to recommend it even to archæologists, for almost every trace of mediæval work had been cut away from time to time in the process of repeated enlargements. A restoration was first contemplated; but as this idea did not meet with popular favor, the Rector, the Rev. E. Marston, boldly proposed its entire re-building. The money was quickly forthcoming, and in July, 1865, the old

church was taken down to make room for the new one. The foundation stone was laid on the 1st November following, by Mr. C. T. W. Parry, who had, besides subscribing liberally towards the building fund, undertaken to build the tower and spire at his own expense, as a memorial of his deceased wife. The church was designed by Mr. James Harrison, and is of the Decorated or Middle Pointed style of architecture; and consists of a nave, chancel, north and south aisles, vestry, and a tower and spire, rising to the height of 155 feet. The length of the Church is 101 feet, and the width, including the lateral aisles, 66 feet. The reredos and font are worthy of careful examination. These fine works were the gifts of Mr. Parry, who may in fact be said to have contributed half the entire cost of the Church.

On the north side of the font lies the defaced effigy of a mail clad Knight, Sir John Whitmore by name, representative, in the reign of Edward III., of the Whitmores of Thurstanston, a Cheshire family of knightly lineage and renown. This monument was discovered in 1853, under a pew at the south-west end; the face, hands, and knees having been barbarously cut away to suit the flooring of the pew. This effigy must have been a fine work, and by an artist of no mean talent: and its present mutilated condition is greatly to be regretted. Its date is 1374.

A brass plate on the south side of the altar commemorates the last resting-place of Matthew Henry, the celebrated Commentator, who lies buried in the chancel of this church. That excellent man died at Nantwich, in this county, on the 22nd June, 1714.

The bones of another celebrity lie mouldering here—Dr. Thomas Parnell, the Poet, Archdeacon of Clogher, who was buried in the Church, October 23rd, 1718.

The advowson is vested in the Earl of Derby, having previously belonged to the Norman barony of Montalt, one of the titles created by Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester.

On the east of the Church is TRINITY STREET, in which stands the oldest Dissenting Chapel in Chester. It was erected in 1700, by the Presbyterian followers and admirers of Matthew Henry, but is now in the hands of the Unitarian body. Relics of Matthew Henry, including his well worn Bible, may be seen, and two modern memorial windows are worthy of inspection—one to Henry, and the other to Professor Martineau. This building was re-fronted in 1862.

Higher up WATERGATE STREET is CROOK STREET, at which point the northern range of Rows commences. Still farther on is GOSS STREET, in which is situate the Goldsmiths' Hall or Assay Office, an establishment for the assaying and marking of gold and silver plate, a prerogative which Chester is said to have enjoyed since the reign of Athelstan, grandson of Alfred the Great. Here are assayed and stamped annually large quantities of plate from Birmingham, Liverpool, Sheffield, and even America, whose jewellers have a keen eye for the guarantee of the Chester Goldsmiths Hall.

The visitor again arrives at the HIGH CROSS. At the end of the north side of WATERGATE STREET stands the Church of St. Peter. It was against the south side of this Church that the ancient Penthouse or *Pentice* of the City was constructed, and in front of which the brutal "bull-bait," described in Chapter VI., took place. It seems quite certain that where St. Peter's Church stands the ancient Roman *Prætorium* was placed; and it is probable that soon after the Roman occupation ceased, a Christian Church was erected here. At all events, it seems certain that a Saxon Church, dedicated to St. Peter, stood here at the time of the Norman Conquest.

Originally the present Gothic Church had a spire, but, falling into a dangerous state, it was taken down in 1669. The building is of different periods, and was carefully restored by Mr. Douglas a few years ago.





CHAPTER IX.

NORTHGATE STREET AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

NORTHGATE STREET—The Rows—The Market—The Town Hall—Pied Bull Hotel—The North Gate—The ancient Gaol—The Chester “Bridge of Sighs”—Blue Coat Hospital—Diocesan Training College—The Abbey Gateway—The Music Hall.

LEAVING the HIGH CROSS and passing along the east end of St. Peter’s Church, the visitor finds himself in **NORTHGATE STREET**—the fourth of the great streets of the City. Again he sees Rows for a short distance on both sides



Northgate Street, and Shoemaker's Row.

of the street. The Row on the west side has lost its old picturesqueness and Shoemaker's Row exists no more but has given place to some handsome shops, which, while maintaining the old style character of the City have obliterated numerous old houses that imparted in their day a most old-world and artistic aspect to this portion of the street. The Row on the east side has been known for a very long time by the name of Broken-shin Row, from the uneven character of the thoroughfare, and the manifest dangers that threatened the shins of those who ventured along it. Originally it is said to have been much longer, probably extending to the ancient abbey buildings or enclosure, but modern requirements, pressed with no artistic or conservative feeling, have cut it short. The accompanying woodcut gives an idea of Shoemaker's Row as seen from the east side of NORTHGATE STREET, a few yards above Broken-shin Row, before rebuilt.



Northgate Street and Market Square.

Above Shoemaker's Row, the visitor enters a large open space wherein stand the Market buildings and the imposing Town Hall. The Market is a large and well-arranged building accommodating all branches. Here cheese fairs are held monthly: and annually the Cheshire Dairy Show,

promoted by the Cheshire Dairy Farmers' Association, takes place within its walls. The extension of the Market behind the Town Hall is sometimes used for large public gatherings. On the occasion of the Mayor's reception of the Indian and Colonial visitors, in 1886, this portion of the Market was turned into a highly decorated banqueting room. The visitor should give a hasty glance at the interior of the Market. The Market was publicly opened on the King's (then Prince of Wales) Wedding Day, March 10th, 1863.

In the space in front of the Market once stood the Exchange, erected in the year 1698, and unfortunately destroyed by fire in 1862. It is to be regretted that several full length portraits of city notables which hung in its rooms perished in the flames.

The visitor may now direct his attention to the Town Hall. This building was erected from the designs of Messrs. Lanyon, Lynn, and Lanyon, Architects, of Belfast, and was formally opened for public use in the autumn of 1869. The façade is very imposing, with its plain and massive basement



The Town Hall.

and its upper range of ten large windows. The tower which rises in the centre of the building is rich in its detail and good in its proportions. It is 160 feet high. The façade is about 130 feet long, whilst that towards PRINCESS STREET is about 128 feet; accordingly the site occupied by the Hall is nearly square. The style of architecture is a modern rendering of Gothic, which lends itself very well to such a public building as this. The ground floor is occupied mainly by the Police Offices, from which corridors run to the range of prison cells, kitchens, and other offices. Above these are arranged the Public Hall, 77 feet long by 40 feet wide; the Magistrates' Court, 50 feet by 35 feet; the Council Chamber, 55 feet by 35 feet; also entrance-hall, waiting-room, muniment-room, Town offices, and other apartments. The principal entrance is from NORTHGATE STREET, under the central tower.

In the Council Chamber are hung excellent portraits of five of the past Mayors of Chester. In the Committee Rooms are panels on which are recorded the names of the Mayors, Sheriffs, and Earls of Chester, from the earliest times. The first Earl lived in the year 875; and the first Mayor was elected in 1267. In the Assembly Room are fine portraits of eight members of the Grosvenor Family, five of whom were Mayors of Chester, painted by such distinguished artists as Bolland, Jackson, Benjamin West, W. W. Ouless, and Daniel Macnee. In the Police Court is a picture of the "Baptism of King Henry the Eighth," and a fine portrait of King George III., the head attributed to Jackson, the robes to Gainsborough, and amongst others a remarkably fine portrait of Recorder Leycester, by Owen. A disastrous fire destroyed in 1897 the Council Chamber, but the damage has since been restored in a manner worthy of the building. Unfortunately also, three valuable portraits were lost in the flames and these cannot be restored, although others have been painted from photographs happily available. The Ancient City Plate and Charters from the time of Henry II., now displayed in a fitting manner in the Muniment Room, are well worthy of inspection.

Continuing his walk up NORTHGATE STREET, the visitor will pass on his left hand a wide street (Hunter Street); glancing down this he will obtain a pleasing view of the distant Welsh hills.

The only noteworthy object on the west side of NORTHGATE STREET which the visitor need notice is the old Pied

Bull Hotel, a noted coaching-house in the "good old times," before steam rendered the "delights of the road" doubtful and tedious, with remains on a pillar of the old coach destination.

The visitor may now walk to the NORTH GATE, over which he has already passed in his walk round the City Walls. The present gateway was designed by the architect, Mr. Thomas Harrison, and replaced a dismal and objectionable old archway and gate-house. Whilst the other three gates were vested, by serjeantry, in different noble families, this—the *Porta septentrionalis* of Roman times—as anciently belonged to the commorant citizens. Prior to 1808, when the present arch was erected, at the expense of Earl Grosvenor, the NORTH GATE, if we credit the engravings handed down to us, was a miserable and incongruous structure. What made it appear more so was the Gaol, or common prison of the city, which occupied a great part of the space around, above, and below it. A prison existed here from the earliest period; it is quoted in documents of the Norman earldom, and was at the time of its demolition a terrible specimen of legalised corruption—an establishment defying even the bosom of a Howard to purge or purify. George Marsh, the Protestant martyr, was here confined preparatory to his death, at the stake, at Spital Boughton. The city sheriff here saw execution done on all criminals capitally convicted within the county; here again the unfortunate debtor got whitewashed, and relieved of his "little odd scores," and here was practised those "tortures thrice refined" which might put even the great Inquisition to the blush. Far away from human gaze, deeply sunk in the solid rock, were chambers hewn, dreadful to survey, horrifying to think upon. Of these, two bore the distinguished titles of "Little Ease," and the "Dead Man's Room." The latter was the spot where condemned criminals awaited their execution, and was "a dark stinking place" in which snakes and other venomous reptiles gambolled at discretion. The "Little Ease," as we read from a contemporary work, was "a hole hewed out in a rock; the breadth and cross from side to side was seventeen inches from the back to the inside of the great door; at the top seven inches, at the shoulders eight inches, and at the breast nine inches and a half; with a *device to lessen the height* as they were minded to torture the person put in, by drawboards which shot over across the two sides, to a yard in height, or thereabouts."

In those blissful times when Oliver Cromwell ruled England with an iron sceptre, these two "pleasantly situated furnished apartments" were in great request by the Barebones magistracy, and it is a matter of record that, locked in their cold embrace numerous unoffending, peace-loving Quakers endured the rod of persecution for conscience sake. And yet, forsooth, those were the oft vaunted days of civil and religious liberty! The Gaol, with its attendant miseries, has gone, but the dungeons we have pictured abide there still, beneath the ground we are now standing on,—though filled up, it is true, and for ever absolved from their ancient uses.

When the visitor passes through the archway, he finds himself on a bridge which spans the Ellesmere Port and Chester Canal. He will observe a small bridge parallel to the one on which he is standing. This has been called the "Bridge of Death," and may appropriately be designated, after the memorable bridge in Venice, the Chester "Bridge of Sighs." It was across this bridge, that felons about to die, usually went from Northgate Gaol, to receive the last offices of the Church, in the Chapel of St. John, on the opposite side of the chasm.

Passing over the canal bridge, the visitor comes to the well-known charitable institution, the Blue Coat Hospital. For centuries prior to the great Civil War there stood on this site a venerable asylum, founded by Randal, Earl of Chester, for "poore and sillie persons," under the name of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist. In the reign of Edward III. a jury of free citizens was sworn to report on the vested rights of this house, and the verdict these worthies returned was this:—

"That there ought to be, and have accustomed to be, in the said Hospital, three chaplains to say mass daily—two in the church, and the third in the chapel—before the poor and feeble sustained in the said Hospital: and that one lamp ought to be sustained at mass every day in the said Hospital, and to burn every night in the whole year: and that thirteen beds, completely clothed, should be sustained in the same Hospital, and receive thirteen poor men of the same city; whereof each shall have for daily allowance a loaf of bread, a dish of pottage, half a gallon of competent ale, and a piece of fish or flesh, as the day shall require."

Not bad fare this for the thirteen brethren, "poore and feeble," who, from all we can judge,

"Must have gone to bed merry—as who could fail?—
On their foaming 'half gallons of competent ale !'"



North Gate, and Blue Coat Hospital.

Thus matters sped with this thriving community for several hundred years; and even at the Reformation, when other and similar institutions foundered in the gale, St. John's Hospital appears to have weathered the storm. It might, indeed, have retained until now its original position, had not England got entangled in that horrid Civil War. Then it was that, with characteristic loyalty, the men of old Chester declared for the King—then it was that the suburbs of the city became a ruinous heap—and that this venerable Hospital was razed to the ground, lest it should serve as a cover for the artillery of the enemy. But the city, which had so bravely withstood one foe, had to succumb before another; for famine at length achieved what the deadly cannon had failed to accomplish! The tale of the Siege has already been told; suffice it then to say, that order and monarchy being once more restored, the site of the Hospital, and the lands belonging to it, were granted by Charles II. to Colonel Whitley, and at his

death to the Mayor and Corporation of Chester, as permanent custodians of the charity. How the Corporation abused their trust, and mis-managed the Hospital ; how they sold its estates, and squandered the proceeds ; and how, after all, "like leeches satiate with evil blood," they had to disgorge their plunder, is, we can assure you, a very pretty story which could be told, but we are mercifully inclined.

A Blue Coat School was established in Chester in 1700, under the auspices of Bishop Stratford ; and seventeen years afterwards, the liberality of the citizens erected in its service a pleasant habitation, on part of the site originally occupied by the Hospital of St. John. But bricks and mortar, like everything else, will not last for ever ; so the old premises having gone to decay, benevolence again put its shoulder to the wheel, and, in 1854, restored the fabric in the handsome manner we now behold it. That graceful little statue over the doorway—a portrait of one of the "Blue Boys"—is a study from the life by Richardson, of London. The old green cap or day-boys have been abolished, and the School made one for boarders only, numbering 50, who are educated, lodged, boarded and clothed free of charge, preference being given to orphans or boys with one parent only.

As for the "thirteen brethren, poor and feeble," of the original foundation, their number, which, from causes already hinted at, had dwindled down to six, has recently been restored—their cottages at the rear of the Blue School rebuilt, and fitted with every convenience,—while each brother and sister now receives an allowance of ten shillings per week.

A little further along, on the right, is DELAMERE STREET, leading to the Cheshire Lines (Northgate) Railway Station, from which communication with Hawarden, Wrexham, Northwich, Manchester, and the Wirral Peninsular is obtained.

The visitor, who has time and inclination for a short stroll, may continue his walk northwards along UPPER NORTHGATE STREET. The road which branches off to the right, at the end of UPPER NORTHGATE STREET, is the LIVERPOOL ROAD which leads to Birkenhead, and on which are built many handsome residences ; on this road also is a Station on the Hawarden and Wrexham branch of the Great Central Railway.

Further along the PARKGATE ROAD stands the Diocesan Training College. This Institution was founded in 1839 for the training and education of Churchmen to become teachers

in the Elementary Schools of the Diocese of Chester, which then comprised the whole of Lancashire and Cheshire. The management is now vested in a Committee representing the three Dioceses of Chester, Manchester, and Liverpool.

The present buildings were erected, mainly by the subscriptions of Churchmen of the Diocese, from the designs of Messrs. Buckler, Architects, of London, and were formally opened by the late Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, on September 1st, 1842.

The Rev. Arthur Rigg, M.A., was Principal from 1839 to 1869, and began here the first English School for Technical Science and Practical Engineering. Linley Sambourne, Alan S. Cole, G. R. Redgrave, R.A., were amongst his pupils, and Sir W. Crookes, F.R.S., was for some time Science Tutor.

The College Practising School, the playground of which adjoins the College premises, was built in 1900, to replace an earlier School whose main room now forms the College Dining Hall.

The College has a resident principal and vice-principal. In its infancy, and while the present edifice was in the course of erection, the College "hid its light under a bushel" in some dreary-looking premises in NICHOLAS STREET, but was removed hither in the autumn of 1842. In addition to the ordinary details of scholastic training, the students are instructed in various branches of manual labour: they are taught how to handle the chisel and the saw, the mattock and the spade. They have on the premises a blacksmith's forge,—at which they manufacture all their own implements and tools:—turning lathes, steam engines, lithographic presses, power looms, and a host of other appliances, are at the service of the inmates: and it is wonderful to see to what proficiency these amateur craftsmen attain,—and all, be it remembered, during their intervals of leisure from more important duties. Subordinate to this "School for school-masters," there is also a Lower School, upon the ground floor, for the education of children. Here the incipient masters in turn officiate, and gradually learn, under the superintendence of their chief, the practical duties of their responsible profession. Under the same roof exists another School, more private and commercial in its character and aims, under the special eye and control of the principal, for the sons of the higher and middle classes of society. Of this latter arm it is sufficient to say that it is conducted on

the same scale of intelligence and liberality which distinguish the other main branches of the institution.

Some years after the building of the College, a Chapel was erected at the south-east corner, for the use of the students; and a chaste little edifice it is, inside as well as out; worthy—if aught here below, indeed, *can* be really worthy—of the holy purpose for which it was designed. The internal fittings and decorations, which are many and beautiful, are almost wholly the work of the industrious students; and, while honourable to their taste in design, reflect the highest credit as well upon their hearts as on their hands.

The College stands just at the angle of junction between PARKGATE ROAD and CHEYNEY LANE. The last-named is one of the most ancient ways in or around Chester, being named as such in some of our very earliest local documents: it leads down direct to Stone Bridge, and formerly, before the PARKGATE ROAD, which is of quite modern construction, existed at all, had its eastern egress into the LIVERPOOL ROAD, by the side of Abbot's Grange.

The visitor may now retrace his steps to the NORTH GATE, and pass down the east side of NORTHGATE STREET, towards the CROSS. Nothing of interest, however, presents itself until the Town Hall is again reached, opposite which stands an imposing mediæval structure, once the principal gateway of the Abbey of St. Werburgh. This was originally a fine piece of architecture, but is now sadly fallen to decay. As the late antiquarian, Mr. Thomas Hughes, says:—"In its halcyon days, few gates indeed might 'stand between the wind and its nobility,' for regal pomp and lordly retinue sought ever and anon a welcome here. And not in vain: for, when once its ponderous doors moved back to give them ingress, the tables of the Refectory and the *bonhomie* of the monks never failed to sustain the hospitable character of the Abbey. Look up through the gloom at the solid masonry of this ancient pile, and at the admirable groining which supports the superstructure;—ginger-bread architecture was all unknown in those mediæval times! On the west side of the archway we can still see the rust-coated staples on which, three or four centuries ago, swung the oaken gates of the Abbey. Times have changed; and the hoary old porter, with his shaven scalp, and keys of 'trewyst steele,' has flitted away from the scene, while the tide of life now flows freely, and without obstruction, 'neath this venerable Gate. Here, in 1554, it

is traditionally said that George Marsh, a champion of the glorious truth, was first imprisoned, preparatory to his trial and martyrdom at the stake. And why? What was the height and might of his offending? Simply this—that ‘after the manner that man then called heresy, so worshipped he the God of his fathers.’ The *heretics* of one age are not unfrequently the saints of another; and certain it is, that the memory of Marsh and the faith he died for, gained rather than lost by the Marian fires! Not long afterwards, if not indeed before, this structure was turned into the Episcopal Registry; the Office of which is now removed to White Friars, where are deposited, in its well-kept archives, the wills and testaments of all who have died, and left aught to leave, within the scattered limits of the wide-spread diocese. The beautiful condition and systematic arrangement of these important records put other and similar Offices terribly to the blush, and are in the highest degree creditable to the zeal and ability of a former Registrar, Henry Raikes, Esq.

The Abbey Gate is now simply the Bishop's Registry for marriage licences and other parochial business.

Speaking of the open space in front of the Gateway in olden times, the same authority remarks:—“The open space was used by the monks of St. Werburgh, from the time of the great Hugh Lupus to the advent of the Reformation, for their annual Fair at the great feast of their saint. It was during one of these Fairs that Earl Randle was besieged in Rhuddlan Castle by the Welsh, when attempting the subjugation of those Cambrian mountaineers. The Earl, perceiving the nice pickle he was in, despatched a letter to De Lacy, his constable at Chester, a ‘ryght valiaunt manne,’ who, rushing into the Fair, presently collected to his standard a motley army of fiddlers and drunken musicians—the ‘tag, rag and bobtail’ there assembled—and with these he forthwith set out to the relief of his beleagured lord. The Welsh, who had previously felt sure of their prey, seeing the immense host approach, and hearing withal the terrible discords of ‘harp, flute, sackbut, and other kinds of music,’ reasonably enough concluded that Bedlam was let loose; and with that doubtful sort of valour, sometimes nicknamed discretion, precipitately took to their heels, and so raised the siege. The Earl returned to Chester at the head of his victorious minstrels, and immediately chartered the holding of this Fair with numerous privileges and immunities, granting to the brave

De Lacy, and to his heirs and assigns for ever, the licensing of and custody over the 'Minstrels of Cheshire,' which prerogative was regularly exercised by his assignees, the Dutton family, until the middle of the eighteenth century. So much for the Abbot's Fair, and the bloodless 'fight of the fiddlers';—we may now fairly enough continue our course of inspection."

Adjoining the venerable Gateway stands the recently erected King's School; and a few steps further the visitor finds himself opposite the west front of the Cathedral. At this point the visitor should commence his survey of the Cathedral, taking the following Chapter as his guide book.

Lower down NORTHGATE STREET stands the Chester Music Hall, which being set back behind the buildings facing the street is not visible. Its eastern end, however, of a late Gothic character, the visitor will see as he passes round the south-west portion of the Cathedral. The present Hall,—which stands on the site of the ancient Chapel of St. Nicholas, built early in the 14th century, and which became desecrated to civil purposes and used as the Common Hall of the city, and subsequently turned into a play-house,—was designed by the late Mr. James Harrison, Architect, whose other contributions to the modern architecture of Chester, we have already noticed. The building contains waiting and retiring rooms, and other offices, a large and convenient hall, measuring 108 ft. long, 40 ft. wide, and 50 ft. high, capable, including its galleries, of accommodating an audience of 1000 persons. It has a spacious orchestra containing an organ; the orchestra seats holding about 200 performers. The Hall was opened on November 26th, 1855, with a grand concert, at which Clara Novello and other distinguished artists appeared.

There is only one ancient house front worthy of notice between the Music Hall and the Cross.





CHAPTER X.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL.

EARLY in the Norman period Chester was recognised as a Cathedral city, for the Bishop of Lichfield (sometimes styled Bishop of Lichfield, Coventry, and Chester) had his seat there; and the Church of St. John the Baptist, standing near the river and outside the Walls, was the Cathedral. Thus Chester, like Rome, London, and Dublin may, in a certain sense, claim the dignity of being a city with two cathedrals. Special notes respecting the Church of St. John will be found in the following Chapter. In the year 1541, King Henry VIII. created several new dioceses, and Chester was selected as one of them, the fine Church of the dissolved Benedictine Monastery of St. Werburgh being chosen to serve as the Cathedral, notwithstanding that the Church of St. John had the prior claim. The Diocese of Chester, as then formed, was first assigned to the Province of Canterbury, and in the following year to that of York. It embraced the County of Chester, the entire County of Lancaster, even to the north portion which lies beyond Morecambe Bay, the County of Westmorland, as far as Shap Fell, a large part of Yorkshire, and portions of Flintshire and Denbighshire. This was an immense diocese, even at the time of its formation; but had it remained undivided to our day it would have contained a population of more than five millions.

In the year 1836, the Diocese of Ripon was formed, taking all the Yorkshire portion away from the Bishopric of Chester; the Westmorland territory, and the northern portion of the County of Lancaster, were assigned to the Diocese of Carlisle; and the Welsh territory was also separated. In 1847 the Diocese of Manchester was formed; and in 1880, the Diocese of Liverpool was established. Now the Diocese of Chester is confined to the County of Cheshire, and presents an ample field for the administration of the most energetic Bishop.

A very few words must suffice regarding the history of the noble Church which is now the Cathedral of Chester. Tradition states that the site has been a sacred one from time immemorial; that in Roman times a Temple of Apollo stood here; and that it was erected on the ruins of an ancient Druidical Shrine. All this, however, is the merest conjecture, and, accordingly, lacks all trustworthy foundation. The first Christian Church is believed to have been erected on this site sometime in the seventh century, but here again uncertainty obtains.

In the discourse concerning the foundation of the Abbey of St. Werburgh, in Ormerod's "History of Chester," we find the following:—"Touching the original foundation of a monastery in this place, there is not anything that I have seen from our historians, or records, which may make a perfect discovery thereof; but by circumstance I do conclude that Wulpherus, King of the Mercians, who flourished about the year of Christ 660, perceiving his daughter Werburgh much disposed to a religious life, caused her to be veiled, and first built it for her, and such other pious ladies who resolved to dedicate their lives to the service of God therein; for, William of Malmsbury, an ancient author and of great credit, speaking of this devout virgin, saith, that she was buried at Chester, in the monastery there, afterwards re-edified by Earl Hugh. Neither doth the charter of King Edgar import less than that the abbey here was of great antiquity. How long it continued a monastery of nuns, I cannot take upon me to say, having no certain information thereof from any good authority, but do conclude it was so till towards the Norman Conquest, and then it seems that canons secular were placed in their stead, which remained therein till Hugh, Earl of Chester, in the sixth year of William Rufus, began the foundation of a new monastery for monks of St. Benedict's order in this place, having procured Anselm, Abbot of Bec, to come over into this realm, chiefly for the ordering of that great work, which being accordingly performed, one Richard, a monk of Bec, and chaplain to the said Anselm, was by him first instituted abbot there. Hugh, the pious founder of this great monastery, had such affection thereto, and so great devotion towards his latter end, that three days before his death he caused himself to be shorn a monk therein, and so departing the world the 6th Cal. of August, 1101, left issue, Richard, who succeeded him in the

earldom of Chester, and not only confirmed all his father's grants to this abbey, but added many more himself, as also did many of his successors in the earldom; and thus in great glory, as the greatest ornament of the city and the parts thereabouts, stood this opulent monastery till the 30th of King Henry VIII's. reign, that all the great houses went to wreck, and that by a public instrument the then abbot and his convent surrendered it to the king, who thereupon of the six new bishoprics then made constituted one in this place, designing the buildings of the abbey for the bishop's palace, and the conventional church for his Cathedral."

An outline of the history of the present church and its several portions built at different periods, can be gathered from the following brief description of the building as it stands.

The general plan of the Cathedral is cruciform, but singularly irregular in the proportions of the North and South Transepts; the latter extending five bays from the Central Tower and having aisles on its east and west sides, whilst the former may be described as only two bays in depth without aisles. The Nave and Choir are aisled throughout; and at the eastern extremity of the Choir is placed the Lady Chapel. On the northern side of the Nave are the Cloisters; and directly adjoining the North Transept is the Vestibule leading into the Chapter-house. Of the monastic buildings only a small portion remains, the most notable being the Refectory with its finely unique reader's pulpit; the room is now used for choir practice and meetings.

EXTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL.

As the visitor approaches the Cathedral from NORTH-GATE STREET he cannot feel much impressed. The West Front is perhaps the least imposing portion of the exterior, being in almost all its parts unfinished and very one-sided in appearance. It consists of a very low-pitched gable, surmounted with raking battlements of large size, decorated with traceried panelling, between two octagonal and battlemented turrets, but "the Heavenly Choir" carved in the border over the doorway should be studied. The Doorway is of moderate dimensions placed under a Late four-centred arch, and flanked by six canopied niches which once contained statues or were designed to receive them.

The window over, nearly the entire width of the gable between the turrets, is placed so low in the wall as to have a somewhat depressing effect on the doorway, and produces a top-heavy appearance in the gable itself. The tracery of the window is rich and very fine of its class, and in some respects is uncommon. It will be observed that the arch enclosing the window is not uniform in both its sides, and that a sort of buttress shows itself projecting from the north turret. These detract somewhat from the feeling of symmetry which should characterise a main gable, although it adds one of quaintness. This portion of the Cathedral was erected by Abbot Simon Ripley, about 1492, and is, accordingly, in the Late Perpendicular style. His scheme included two massive and imposing western towers, but only the lower part of one was executed. The greater portion of the façade has been restored. The pile of modern buildings, on the visitor's left hand, which extend from the Abbey gateway to the north-west turret of the Cathedral, is the King's School. These buildings have succeeded the old Episcopal Palace, which in its turn, succeeded the still older Abbot's Lodging of the Abbey. There is, therefore, some reason for erecting the King's School, where, at first sight it may appear out of place, huddled against the façade of the Cathedral. This matter, however, was well considered, and the best course, under all circumstances, was doubtless taken by the Dean and Chapter. The new School was erected in 1873.

Moving southwards from the west gable of the Cathedral, the visitor comes to a low and massive building extending from the south-west turret; this is the commencement of Abbot Simon Ripley's great South-west Tower. From this beginning one can imagine the dignity of the Tower as projected. The interior is used as the Consistory Court, in which in olden days were tried, before the Chancellor of the Diocese, the validity or otherwise of disputed wills, actions for slander, and other causes falling within the province of ecclesiastical laws. A bold and deeply recessed window, flanked by niches, and placed under a traceried band, relieves the western face of this portion. As the visitor directs his attention to the south side of the Cathedral, he sees immediately behind the Consistory Court a very beautiful South Porch, which opens into the South Aisle of the Nave. The architecture of this Porch, which has been carefully

restored, deserves attention, presenting as it does a most characteristic specimen of the Tudor style. The entrance has the usual four-centred arch of the period, under a richly moulded square head; the spandrels being ornamented with tracery and carving. Immediately over the head is a band of quatrefoils, containing shields and flowers. From the centre rises a deeply recessed niche, which divides a low square lintelled window, and terminates above in rich canopy work, cleverly combined with the mouldings, tracery, and battlements which decorate the upper part of the Porch. Buttresses and crocketed pinnacles complete the external design. The Porch is ceiled internally with (restored) fan-tracery, so characteristic of Tudor architecture.

Eastward, extends the south aisle wall of the Nave, divided into four bays by lofty pinnacled buttresses, and pierced with richly traceried windows of four lights; the arches of which are surmounted with crocketed canopies. The wall is finished, between the buttresses, with a sculptured cornice and traceried battlement of bold design. This Aisle is of Late Decorated architecture. Over the Aisle appears the Clerestory, with its windows, lofty, and filled with simple Perpendicular tracery. Flying buttresses extend from the aisle buttresses to the clerestory wall.

The visitor has now reached in his survey the great South Transept, which in its magnitude, appears quite out of proportion to the Nave. In general treatment and in the period of its erection it is similar to the Nave, and accordingly calls for only a brief description. The architectural student standing before the south end of this Transept cannot help being struck with its singularly bald character, for whatever its original beauty and interest may have been, they were completely done away with by the unskilful and uncaring hands of the earlier restorer. It is to be earnestly hoped that serious efforts will soon be made to extend the later restoration to this imposing gable. Alluding to the disproportionate size of the South Transept in comparison with the North Transept, and indeed in comparison with the Nave and Choir, the late Dean Howson remarks:—"This immense size of the South Transept is so curious, that it demands the best explanation we can give. With this question too are bound up some very remarkable passages of monastic and parochial history: while, architecturally, the great Southern part of the Cathedral has a dignity of its own, which adds

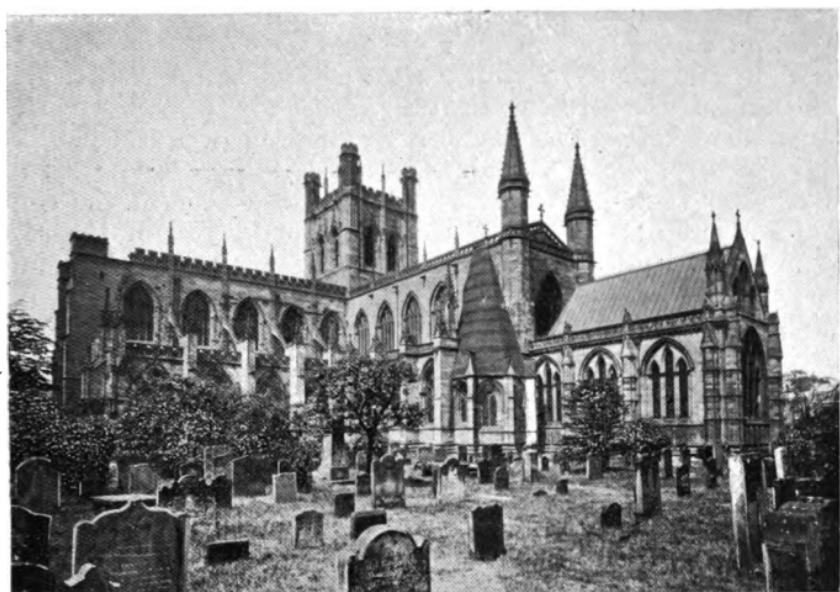
very much to the impression made by its extraordinary size. Popularly this Transept was called St. Oswald's Church; and in one sense, though not in all respects, this is a correct designation. Since the latter part of the 15th century, the right of worship had existed here for the parish of St. Oswald, which lies to the West and North of the Cathedral. Architecturally, however, this Transept has always been part of the great Church of St. Werburgh in its monastic period, and subsequently after it became a Cathedral: and the duty of repair had rested, since the Reformation, with the Chapter of Chester. The junction of the names of St. Oswald and St. Werburgh in one building is so remarkable, that it deserves our careful attention at this point. Both are Saxon names; both are royal names; and respectively they represent two streams of religious influence, two distinct missionary enterprises, under which the northern part of England became Christian

"What happened historically and architecturally, is probably, in its main features, as follows. The monks of the later house of St. Werburgh, in their great days, were ambitious to extend the proportions of their church. It was a church of pilgrimage, and the monastery was one of distinction and renown. The extension of it to the north was impossible, because the monastic buildings were there. On the south, close under the shadow of this great monastery, was the parish church of St. Oswald. This was enclosed, absorbed, and finally obliterated by the erection of the great South Transept. A new church, where the Music Hall now stands, was given to the parishioners: but in the end—in the latter part of the 15th century—they recoiled upon the monks, and obtained leave to hold their worship on their old ground, which was now in the interior of the southern part of the monastic church: and this right subsisted ever since in this part of the Church during its Cathedral history. In the intervals of the Cathedral Services, the parishioners of St. Oswald's had been free to use this section of the building: though the parish had been rapidly growing in population, they had no other place of worship."

At the southern end of the West Aisle of this Transept, the visitor will notice a door of late fifteenth-century work inserted in the window of the Late Decorated Period. This was clearly an afterthought, rendered necessary on the appropriation of the Transept as the Parish Church of St. Oswald.

In this large Transept, work of the 14th and 15th centuries are interwoven. The walls and windows of the Eastern Aisle are of Late Decorated work, whilst the windows of the Western Aisle are filled with Perpendicular tracery of a different character to that of the windows of the Clerestory. It will be observed that the tracery of the Clerestory in this Transept is, with the exception of one window, much richer than the tracery of the south Clerestory of the Nave. The battlements of the Transept Clerestory are also richer than that of the Nave. The southern end of the East Aisle of the Transept has been well restored, and here the visitor should note the curious and humorous carvings, which, after the manner of the sculptors of the middle ages, have been fashioned to represent celebrated individuals of the time. The more prominent figures are those of the late Earl of Beaconsfield and of the late Mr. W. E. Gladstone; the former with sword supporting the crown, and the latter with a lever upsetting a church tower and toppling over a triple-crowned mitre. The ideas aimed at are obvious. Beautiful photographs of these sculptures, and all portions of the Cathedral, are published in Bedford's Series of Views.

At this point the visitor should continue his inspection of the exterior of the Cathedral, by ascending to the City Walls. From them a most satisfactory view is obtained of the Tower, the east side of the South Transept, the Choir, and the Lady Chapel, all of which have been restored in a very complete manner. The Tower, as now seen, is unfinished, simply because its original designers contemplated finishing it with a spire. This is amply proved by the four squinches, which are constructed in the internal angles of the tower, for the support of four sides of an octagonal spire, the remaining four rising from the four sides of the Tower. Until a curious discovery of built-in tombstones of the thirteenth century under the north-eastern pier of this Tower was made, in the progress of the restoration of the interior, it was generally believed that the Tower stood upon Norman piers, encased with Late Decorated masonry, such, however, is evidently not the case. For the present design externally Sir George Gilbert Scott is altogether answerable, for, at the time he undertook the restoration the exterior was too much worn away to allow of anything approaching an accurate idea of the original design being obtained. He seems, however, to have found an indication of the small pinnacles which



Cathedral, S.E., from the City Walls.

divide the faces, and which run alongside the angle turrets. Everything above the cornice is pure conjecture. The design generally is successful, and from some points of view is highly satisfactory.

The general treatment of the Choir resembles that of the rest of the building, externally, but its earlier character is easily noted, especially in the windows of the South Aisle. The tracery of the Clerestory is later. The entire architectural history of the Choir is extremely interesting but somewhat complicated.

The most singular feature in the south-east view, now under consideration, and one which cannot fail to arrest the eye, is the Apsidal Chapel projected from the South Aisle of the Choir, with its unusually high-pitched and somewhat top-heavy roof of stone, cut off vertically on its side towards the Aisle. This Sir George Gilbert Scott considered he had ample authority for constructing. He may have believed so, but it is quite clear if such a feature existed in ancient times, it must certainly have been novel in English architecture, and we venture to think it was never copied in any other English building. Its origin could only have been owing to

direct Continental influence, for a similar treatment is to be found in the apse chapels of the Church of Norrey, near Caen, in Normandy. But we cannot do better than let the architect of the present feature speak for himself. In a Paper read before the Chester Architectural, Archæological, and Historic Society, Sir George Gilbert Scott says:—“We never thought, however, but that the roof of the south apse had been similar to that of the north, and of the same moderate altitude. But in removing a part of the later timber roofs of the south chapel, and some of the rubbish which had accumulated beneath it, we found concealed by it, portions of the sloping surfaces of the old apse roof of that side. These were small in extent, but potent in evidence. The first thing that struck us was their excessive steepness of slope—almost like the spire of a church—and on tracing these slopes to their intersection, what was my surprise at finding that they represented a stone roof of no less than forty-two feet high above the tops of the walls. The western side of this extraordinary structure we found to have been vertical, for a fragment of the lower side remains with the weather mould of the aisle roof upon it; against the clerestory is the mark of another high stone roof, running at right angles to the spire, and as we find intersected with it. This is shown on all the old prints, and still exists. We found then that we possessed ample proofs of a feature which, though unique in England, is in several instances found in France, especially at Norrey, in Normandy, where the radiating chapels at the east end are precisely similarly roofed. We found vestiges of its eaves-course at its intersection with the east wall, and on cutting into the modern wall below we found remnants of the old corner buttress shown in the old plans, and of the window jamb attached to it, as well as the window of its southern face; so that, although we had not yet perfect material for its reproduction, we had a good instalment of the necessary evidence. The double fact that we possessed evidence of such an architectural curiosity, and that we possessed also nearly sufficient details for the restoration of the beautiful design of the side of the lady chapel, gave rise to the idea at first but timidly thought of, whether it might be considered lawful, under circumstances so exceptional, to remove the southern chapel, which had been the means of obliterating both, and to restore the southern side as it was in the days of Edward I. At first it seemed to go counter

to our established view in restoration, and it was only the extreme value architecturally, of the features to be recovered, that led me to entertain it. Many architectural antiquaries were consulted, and there seemed to be a genuine concensus of opinion, that the exceptional circumstances would warrant an exceptional course, and so, after long consideration, we determined on it. The result is that in the later walls which we have removed, nearly all the remaining evidence and details have been discovered, and we are now enabled to reproduce this remarkable apse with almost absolute precision and perfectness."

The visitor, as he stands on the Walls, has a good view of the completely restored Early English Lady Chapel, which terminates the Cathedral eastwards. Originally this Chapel was entered from the Choir only; this was when the Choir retained its Norman form, and its aisles terminated in small apses. The Norman Choir gave way to another, commenced in the Early English, and completed in the Early Decorated period; but still the Lady Chapel continued free on both its sides, just as it is seen to-day on its south side. In the Perpendicular period, the ends of the earlier aisles were removed, and extensions made eastward, so as to close in two bays of the Lady Chapel on each side. This arrangement is clearly shown in the plan of the building given in Winkle's "Cathedral Churches of England and Wales." In his engravings, the Lady Chapel is shown with an almost flat roof, and with windows filled with Perpendicular tracery. Winkle's plan also shows the first angle buttress of the Early Decorated apse, which has now been restored at the end of the South Aisle. On the north side of the Lady Chapel, the Perpendicular extension of the North Aisle of the Choir still remains; and, internally, serves as a vestibule to the Lady Chapel, which is now used as a Morning Chapel, and for the Administration of the Holy Communion and other Services, when the congregations are small. The entire Lady Chapel has been carefully restored, and brought back to what it originally was as closely as conjecture and architectural experience could arrive at. The new high-pitched roof has been cleverly managed so as not to interfere with the east window of the Choir; and well-designed pinnacles and a gable, containing a window borrowed from an example in Wells Cathedral, terminates the roof eastward.

The visitor should now walk a little further along the Walls, until he commands a good view of the north-eastern portions of the Cathedral and the adjacent buildings. Here the Perpendicular extension of the Choir Aisle, and its connexion with the Lady Chapel, will be seen. The two buildings adjoining the small North Transept, are the Chapter House and the old Refectory of the Abbey. The latter badly requires restoration, but the former has been brought back to its original appearance. Internally, this Chapter House is a beautiful and interesting example of pure Early English architecture, and is one of the gems of the Cathedral, as the visitor will realise, when he comes to examine it and its charming Vestibule. Beyond the Chapter House rises the small North Transept. The foundations and lower portion of the Transept are of Norman work, whilst the portion seen over the Chapter House is restored in the Perpendicular style. The large north window contains entirely new tracery, designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott.

The visitor should now descend the steps from the Walls, and walk along ABBEY STREET, towards ABBEY SQUARE, noticing in his way all that can be seen of the North Transept and the north side of the Cathedral. On reaching ABBEY SQUARE, he will observe the late Perpendicular architecture of the Clerestory of the Nave, and obtain another fine view of the Centre Tower. As the visitor moves across the Square to its north-west corner, he sees the rear of the King's School, already mentioned. Before him is the grand but somewhat gloomy Gateway of the Abbey, a building of the fourteenth century. On passing through this Gateway, the visitor finds that he is once more in NORTHGATE STREET, and that he has entirely circled the Cathedral and all its associated buildings.

INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL.

The visitor should now retrace his steps to the beautiful South Porch, and through it enter the Nave. Taking up a position in the centre of the building, on the western flight of steps, a perfect and most satisfactory view of the interior is obtained; and here the proportions of the different features of the Nave, its Aisles, the Crossing, and the Choir may be studied and compared. The Nave is imposing in its severe plainness. The piers supporting the main arches on the north side, are moulded into groups of attached shafts, and

have capitals of sculptured foliage, whilst those on the south side are mostly moulded and relieved with carved pateræ. This dissimilarity is noteworthy. The length of the Nave is 145 feet, its breadth, including its Aisles, is 75 feet. The width of the Nave proper, is 32 feet 6 inches, and its height 78 feet.

The Pointed work of the Nave was commenced about the year 1320, and to this Period belongs the South Aisle and the arcade. It appears somewhat uncertain at what date the northern arcade was commenced. In the capital of the first free northern pillar at the west end of the Nave, are found the letters S. R., the initials of Simon Ripley, who was the Abbot from 1485 to 1492. To him, therefore, the upper part of the northern arcade of the Nave is generally attributed. Abbot Oldham succeeded Ripley, and carried on the work, but it was not until the early part of the sixteenth century, that the Clerestory of the Nave was finished by Abbot Birkenshaw. It should be noticed that the eastern bay of the Nave, adjoining the Crossing, is of a different and earlier treatment to all the other bays. Here the windows of the Clerestory are cusped, the Triforium railing is traceried; and the mouldings of the arches are carried down the piers, without any interruption. There is no doubt that this bay of the Nave was originally included in the Choir. The vaulting shafts and the springers of the vault were built in the fifteenth century, but a stone vault was never constructed. The present ceiling is of oak, and was constructed during the recent restoration, by Sir George Gilbert Scott, in appropriate style, the ribs being continued from those commenced in the stone springers. It was found unsafe to attempt a vault in stone, so wood was employed, a proceeding for which ample precedent exists at York, Lincoln, and elsewhere. In the centre of the ceiling are the arms of H. R. H., the Prince of Wales, who, as Earl of Chester, contributed to the restoration; and in the other bosses are the arms of the Duke of Westminster, the Earl of Derby, the Earl of Sefton, and Lord Egerton of Tatton.

At the western end of the South Aisle is the Consistory Court, already mentioned, with a quaint piece of Jacobean architecture over its entrance. The woodwork in the Court is also interesting, and is of the same period. Over the South Porch adjoining is a parvis, now the Munitment-room of the Cathedral. The visitor, after examining the fine

Flowing Decorated windows of the South Aisle, should pass over to the western end of the North Aisle. Here he will find some of the most important remains of the original Norman Church of Hugh Lupus. This portion, now used as the Baptistry, forms the lower part of the old Norman north-west Tower, though for a long time it was incorporated in the Abbot's Lodgings, and subsequently in the Bishop's Palace,



Chester Cathedral Mosaics, North Aisle.

and was only restored to the Church in 1885. The fine Font is the gift of Lord Egerton of Tatton. The wall all along the North Aisle is also Norman, as can be clearly seen on the cloister side. The dead and uninteresting face of this wall, once so unsightly, is now rendered highly decorative by the series of mosaic pictures which incrust it. The mosaics were executed by Messrs. Burke and Co., London, from cartoons furnished by Messrs. Clayton and Bell, at the cost of the late Mrs. Platt, of Dunham Park, Altringham. The colouring of these mosaics is of necessity low-toned and quiet, for all the tesserae are of natural marbles. In each bay is represented one of the four leading men of Old Testament history, namely, Abraham, Moses, David, and Elijah.

Flanking each figure are subjects from his life. The figure of Abraham is flanked by the "Sacrifice of Isaac," and the "Burial of Sarah;" that of Moses, by the "Finding of the Cradle in the Nile," and "Aaron and Hur Supporting the Lawgiver's Hands;" that of David, by "David before Saul," and the "King's Grief at the News of Absalom's Death;" and that of Elijah, by the "Angel appearing to Elijah," and the "Prophet's Denunciation of Ahab." Architectural framework, canopies, and small figures, artistically disposed, complete the wall-decoration.

The stone vaulting of this Aisle is modern; and was constructed at the expense of the late R. Platt, Esq., whose arms are sculptured in one of the bosses. A mural monument to Mr. and Mrs. Platt is placed on the wall adjoining the Baptistry.

The visitor will now most conveniently enter the North Transept from the Aisle he has just been examining. He will, naturally, be struck in finding it so very small in plan, compared with the general scale of the Cathedral. This Transept remains of the size first projected in the earliest Norman edifice; and this fact is clearly shown by the character of the masonry and architecture of its lower walls. As the late Dean Howson remarks:—"The monastic buildings lay to the north of the Church, the Chapter House and Dormitory being immediately contiguous to the Transept. Thus the Monks of St. Werburgh, however ambitious they might be of expansion, could not expand their church in this direction . . .

We see here what the Norman Church used to be, at least in one important part of it. The masonry of small stones, with large interstices of mortar, in the east and north sides, tells its own story; and the story is made more articulate by the immediate proximity of later masonry, consisting of closely-fitted large stones. But notice must be taken here of something more than the surface stone-work of the enclosing walls. A large Norman archway, resting on well-defined pillars, once opened freely into a Chapel on the east, which is now termed the Canons' Vestry . . . The propriety of removing the wall of comparatively recent date, which now fills up the archway, was carefully considered during the recent restoration; but it was not thought prudent to dispense with stone-work, which might have some essential connection with the safety of the Tower. Above this is a small row of arches, in the Triforium, of even greater interest. Their

rudeness, simplicity, and massiveness, show that they belong to the time of the very beginning of the building of this Church. On the west side, opposite, three round-headed Norman windows, now closed, may still be traced."

As the upper part of the Transept is of later date, it may be safely surmised that the old Norman Transept was, comparatively speaking, low in its walls. The windows are filled with restored or new tracery in the Perpendicular style. The roof of the Transept is a fine sample of late woodwork, and bears on one of its large beams the arms of Cardinal Wolsey: the reason for the appearance of these arms here, and again in one of the bosses of the North Cloister vault no doubt being that he was Archbishop of York when these buildings were erected.

The visitor may now divert his attention from ancient to modern things, and inspect the very interesting monument which occupies a prominent position in this Transept. This was erected by American subscriptions to the memory of the celebrated Bishop Pearson, who occupied the See from 1673 to 1686. He is justly celebrated for his great work on the Creed, and for his great piety and learning. One writer has paid him a high tribute by saying that "even the very dust of his writings was gold." The monument is designed in the form of an ancient altar-tomb, on which lies a recumbent effigy of the Bishop in his episcopal robes, with mitre and pastoral staff: two angels kneel at his feet. The sides of the tomb are formed with a series of twelve richly-moulded arches, each arch forming a niche from which projects a head of one of the Apostles in high relief; under each head is carved the particular sentence of the Creed which tradition attributes to that Apostle. The tomb and effigy are executed in Caen stone, and the small columns are of polished Devonshire marble. The peculiarity of the monument, however, consists in the metal-work canopy, or "hearse," by which it is covered. Few, if any, monuments of this character and richness were erected in the Middle Ages, without being covered, or intended to be covered, by a canopy of stone, wood, or metal; many of the first, some few of the second, but rare examples of the last material still exist.

In this monument, therefore, the architect, Sir Arthur W. Blomfield, of London, has endeavoured to revive a very beautiful feature of ancient monumental art which is now seldom used. The canopy, which takes the form of a gabled

roof with a groined ceiling, supported on four pillars at each angle of the tomb, is constructed entirely of iron, brass, and copper, except the ceiling, which is of wood, and decorated with colour; the introduction of crystals and Derbyshire spar adds richness to the general effect. At the angles, on supporting pillars, stand four angels, bearing the "armour of righteousness." The metal-work was executed, from the architect's designs, by Mr. Skidmore, of Coventry, and the tomb and effigy by Mr. Thomas Earp, of London.



Cathedral Choir, looking West.

Before leaving the North Transept, the visitor should note the large organ pipes which are placed against the north wall. The Organ is about to be re-built and reconstructed by Hill, of London, care being taken to preserve the admirable tone of the instrument, due to the age and mellowness of the pipes.

Turning now to the east, the visitor should commence his survey of the beautiful Choir, with its truly magnificent carved oak stalls and its other treasures of mediæval and modern art. The western face of the elaborate screen which stretches across the eastern arch of the Tower and separates the Choir from the Crossing, is of English oak, from the

designs of Scott. This light structure took the place of the old stone screen, upon which stood the previous Organ. It is so designed as to work in with the returned stalls of the Choir, and yet to interfere as little as possible with the view of the worshippers in the Nave and Crossing. On passing into the Choir, the visitor cannot help being struck with the singular magnificence of the stall-work which stretches eastward on both sides. It is quite certain that no stall-work of greater richness and beauty exists elsewhere in England, although that in Lincoln Cathedral closely approaches it. The whole of the rich canopy-work has been most carefully restored. There is here a curious and interesting series of misereres, all ancient with the exception of six. The misereres are deserving of careful examination. The lover of ancient ecclesiastical oak carving should also examine the stall end bearing the curious poppy head, representing the sacred genealogy springing from Jesse. Much of the modern carving, executed by Mr. Thompson, of Peterborough, is excellent, and worthy of careful examination.

The Episcopal Throne terminates the Stalls on the south side, and is designed to accord with them. This Throne was largely contributed to by the Clergy in the Diocese; and is the work of Messrs. Farmer and Brindley. It contains besides the Bishop's seat, stalls for the Bishop's Chaplains. Opposite the Throne is the Pulpit, the gift of the Freemasons of Chester. Its carvings represent the Building of Solomon's Temple, the Preaching of St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness, and the Shewing of the Heavenly City of the Apocalypse to St. John the Evangelist. The Pulpit is also the work of Messrs. Farmer and Brindley.

The remaining important piece of woodwork in the Choir, which deserves special notice, is the Communion Table. This work is not only noteworthy on account of its design and execution, but also from the fact that it is formed entirely of wood grown in Palestine. The top of the Table is a massive slab of oak from Bashan, the richly carved panels are of olive wood (some smaller parts of the work are in wood from the Mount of Olives), and the shafts at the angles of the table are of cedar from Lebanon. The carved panels are the work of Mr. G. P. Armitage, of Altrincham, and reflects the greatest credit on his skill. They represent the palm, grape vine, wheat, olive, thorn, the reed or bulrush, hyssop, myrrh and flax. All then connected with this remarkable Table is

appropriate and expressive. The reredos above contains a mosaic picture of the Last Supper, enclosed in an elaborate framework and surmounted with a range of canopies, that above our Lord's head being carried upward and terminated in a cross.

The visitor should examine the modern metal-work, especially the Lectern and Communion Rail, and then direct his attention to the floor of the Choir. The following notes from the pen of the late Dean Howson, cannot but be interesting:—"The floor of the Choir was, during the Restoration, made the subject of great care and thought; and in the result it is believed to be very harmonious with the colour of the walls and the woodwork and the decoration of the roof. In the space to the East of the Stalls are, in incised marble, the heads of the twelve Apostles, round the Lectern, and the heads of four Doctors of the Church at the angles. With the thought of that unity of the Church, for which we all ought to long, a deviation has here been made from the conventional arrangement: and we have here, not four Latin Doctors, or four Greek, but two Latin and two Greek—St. Ambrose, as representing Church Music; St. Augustine, Theology; St. Athanasius, the Creeds; and St. Chrysostom, Preaching. On the raised steps at the East, are representations of the Passover in incised marble. The border round these four stone pictures is of fragments of tessellated pavement, brought from the Temple area at Jerusalem. The tiles in this part of the Church were supplied from the Jackfield works, in Shropshire."

The modern vaulted ceiling of oak should now be examined. It was erected at the expense of R. Platt, Esq. The decoration has been executed by Messrs. Clayton and Bell. The subjects in the eastern bays are the sixteen Prophets, each bearing a sentence in Latin from his own prophecies. In the compartments of the western bays are figures of Angels playing musical instruments. On each side of the ribs are ornamental borders, which give a feeling of richness to the entire ceiling.

Space will not permit us to dwell longer on the description of the modern works of art, and we must now turn our attention to the architecture of the Choir. It comprises five well-proportioned arches on each side, the mouldings of which differ; those of the north arches are bold and effective, whilst those on the south are simply a succession of small hollows,

producing little effect of light and shade. Both ranges of arches spring from moulded capitals. Above these arches are the triforium arcades, consisting of cusped arches springing from grouped shafts. A bold clerestory surmounts the triforium.

The most, or in fact the only, disappointing part of the Choir is its East end. This, with its small arch and elevated window, cannot be considered successful from an architectural point of view. The treatment was dictated by the position of the Early English Lady Chapel, and was, accordingly, a necessity, not a choice. The style of the Choir generally is Early Decorated, or the period immediately succeeding the Early English.

The visitor will now pass into the North Aisle of the Choir, where he will find some interesting records of the different architectural developments of the Abbey Church. Traces of the Norman Choir can be seen in a base of one of its massive round pillars, now exposed at the Western end of the Aisle. A curved line of dark marble in the floor of the Aisle marks where the Norman apsidal termination was. The visitor should enter and examine the architecture of the Canons' Vestry. The Early English work in this Aisle can be easily detected by examining the change which shows itself in the vaulting, a little eastward of the before-mentioned line in the floor. In the wall hereabouts is a fine piscina, which clearly indicates that an altar stood close to the spot in the Early English period. The Perpendicular work presented by this interesting Aisle, commences on a line with the eastern wall of the Choir. This portion was constructed for the purpose of gaining convenient access to the Lady Chapel. The monks removed the Early English termination of the Aisle and built the present extension, enclosing two bays of the Lady Chapel, providing an Aisle Chapel, as well as a vestibule to the Lady Chapel. A similar arrangement was carried out at the same time on the south side, but this was swept away at the restoration and the present apse constructed, as has already been mentioned fully in our remarks on the exterior of the South Aisle Choir.

The visitor will now enter the Lady Chapel. The Chapel, as its Early English architecture will at once show, was erected previously to the Choir; and, as has already been stated, in its original form it projected free, and had three three-light windows on each side, just as now exists on the

South side; and was in that form entered only through the arch in the east wall of the Choir. The high altar in the Choir was doubtless placed somewhat westward of this arch, and the arch accordingly was left open, or at most screened across so as to mark the line dividing the Choir from the Lady Chapel. This mode of access to the Chapel was found inconvenient, so about the beginning of the sixteenth century the extensions of the Choir Aisles were made. The architecture of the interior of the Lady Chapel is refined and highly characteristic of this most beautiful period of English Gothic. The groined roof is in its original state, save as regards the polychromatic decoration, which was executed by Mr. Octavius Hudson about the year 1855, and in one of its bosses is represented the murder of Archbishop Thomas à Becket, which took place in 1170, or about one hundred and odd years before the vault was constructed. The modern mosaic decoration at the east end were designed by Sir Arthur Blomfield. The walls have been panelled in English Oak after the design of the late Mr. C. E. Kempe. At the west end stands the Shrine of St. Werburgh, the lower portion of which was used for many years as the base of the Bishop's Throne.

At the time of the Reformation this Chapel was used as the Consistory Court of the Diocese; and within its walls George Marsh was condemned to be burnt for teaching the doctrines which were subsequently embodied in the Prayer Book and the Articles of the Church of England. Marsh was burnt to death in Boughton.

The Chapel is used daily for the early celebrations of the Holy Communion.

Passing again through the North Aisle and the Choir, the visitor will enter the South Aisle of the Choir. The hand of the enthusiastic restorer is evident here, for previous to his entry on the field, this Aisle terminated eastward precisely as the North Aisle now terminates. The Perpendicular work was swept away; and the apsidal termination, believed to be a correct reproduction of the feature which existed in the time of Edward I., was substituted. This is the portion which is surmounted by the peculiar, high, conical roof already spoken of. The apse has been made a memorial to an eminent Cheshire man of the last century—the late Thomas Brassey, Esq., whose name is honorably connected with some of the greatest works of civil engineering in Europe. The entire apse was constructed at the expense of

his sons. The mosaics are by Salviati, of Venice, from designs by Messrs. Clayton and Bell. On the north wall is a memorial bust of the late Mr. Brassey. The windows are by Messrs. Clayton and Bell, and contain subjects inculcating the grace of Faith, Hope, and Charity. In the compartments of the vault are heads, in pairs, still in allusion to these graces: thus, Abraham and St. Peter represent Faith; David and St. John, Charity; and Noah and St. Paul, Hope.

In the North Aisle is a very curious altar-tomb, but to whom it was erected remains a mystery. As the late Dean Howson says:—"It has been a tradition that this is the tomb of Emperor Henry IV. of Germany: and it certainly would be a signal distinction of this Cathedral, if it could shew the sepulchre of the German Emperor who met Pope Gregory VII. in the snow at Canossa. This, however, is an idle story; and the problem of this monument remains to be solved." The mural arches in this Aisle are worthy of notice. On leaving the Aisle the visitor should examine the beautiful gates of Spanish workmanship, the gift of the late Duke of Westminster.

The great South Transept is now entered, and its immense proportions become at once apparent. It is as large as the Choir and almost as large as the Nave. The Transept measures 78 feet 4 inches long, and 77 feet wide, including its Aisles. The Architecture is of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Good Decorated tracery are to be seen in the windows of the East Aisle; whilst the windows of the West Aisle are filled with Perpendicular tracery, also of good character.

In this Transept are some fine stained glass windows by Mr. Kempe, whilst the great south window (by Heaton, Butler and Bayne), is very striking. It and the renewed tracery were given by Earl Egerton of Tatton as a memorial to his father. The restoration of the South Transept is a work the late Duke of Westminster had much at heart. The scheme to effect this as a memorial of the late Duke was initiated by His Honour Sir Horatio Lloyd, by whose enterprising efforts, with the aid of a small Committee, sufficient funds (about £10,000) were forthcoming from the many admirers of the Duke, without any public advertisement, to meet the necessary expense of so important an undertaking. The contract of Messrs. Thompson and Co., of Peterborough, was accepted, and the work placed in their hands. A complete restoration

was effected, and under the guidance of Sir Arthur W. Blomfield and Sons (the Cathedral architects), they have wrought a wonderful transformation in the Transept's internal appearance.

The stone of the columns and walls, scraped of its white-wash, looks perfectly new, and this and the repair of the decayed and dilapidated stone-work have made a vast improvement in themselves. But the restoration has proceeded much further. The stone vaulting of the western aisle has been completed, and the broad aisle has been vaulted in oak to harmonise with the architecture of the nave. The old boarded floor has been removed, and substituted for it is a beautifully level flooring of hard Yorkshire flags, laid on a bed of concrete.

All these improvements have given the South Transept of Chester Cathedral—one of the largest South Transepts in the kingdom—a graceful and dignified interior, and have brought it into harmony with the general scheme of the Cathedral architecture. The larger bosses in the centre aisle depict Old Testament scenes, and the four coloured ones are heraldic, representing the arms of the Grosvenor family, the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Chester, and the Dean of Chester.

The bosses in the western aisle, which are carved out of huge blocks of stone, represent scenes in the life of our Saviour, including "The Baptism of our Lord," the Transfiguration, the Resurrection, and the Ascension.

A recumbent effigy of the late Duke is placed under the middle arch and between the pillars separating the central and western aisles of the transept. Mr. F. W. Pomeroy has produced a strikingly faithful likeness. The figure is executed in finest Carrara marble. It rests upon a plinth of Sienna marble. The sarcophagus or altar tomb was designed by Mr. Charles Blomfield, and is after the 16th century style. It is worked in Staffordshire alabaster divided into eight large panels, each containing heraldic shields on which appear the portcullis, wheat-sneaf, and Tudor rose. Around the capping, which is in one piece of alabaster, is a solid bronze inscription plate, on which appears raised burnished letters, reading thus:—"To the glory of God, and in memory of Hugh Lupus, first Duke of Westminster, K.G., Lord Lieutenant of the County of Chester. Born October 13, 1825—Died December 22, 1899."

A space of 18 inches is devoted to a polished marble floor, consisting of Genoa green marble and Pavonazza. The whole is surrounded by elaborate railings consisting of a bronze plinth and wrought-iron sides relieved by bronze mouldings. On each side in the rails appears the Grosvenor motto, "Virtus non Stemma." Each angle is surmounted by the Grosvenor Talbot holding a bannerette. The alabaster work, flooring and the fixing of the whole was executed by Messrs. W. Haswell and Son, of the Kaleyards, Chester, and the railings by Messrs. Hart, Son, Peard and Co., London and Birmingham. It is evident to all that each firm has put in its best work, and there is not a blemish from the railings to the figure. The whole forms a very handsome monument to the memory of him whose features are so wonderfully reproduced,—one of the noblest of men and benefactors of the whole nation.

Passing from the Transept, through the crossing, to the door in the eastern bay of the North Aisle of the Nave, the visitor can enter the Cloisters of the old Abbey. One quarter of the Cloister-enclosure has been restored, but the rest is untouched except by the hand of time. Walking westward from the door by which he has entered, the visitor will observe in the aisle wall some fine Norman arches, and at the west end a Norman passage of considerable interest. This side of the enclosure, with its vaulting, is entirely new, being restored from a few fragments which remained of the original work. It was found absolutely necessary to rebuild this part so as to furnish a support to the new vaulting of the North Aisle of the Nave. It will be observed that the Cloister here has a sort of shallow aisle; this was used in monastic times as writing and study places for the monks. At the time of the restoration some fragments of tiling were discovered, showing that the floor was originally richly tiled. On passing into the west walk, it will be observed that the scriptoria or writing places are continued for some distance. From this portion of the Cloisters the visitor enters a large vaulted chamber, of early Norman architecture, and of great interest. The exact use to which this was put has not been clearly decided. According to some it was an ambulatory for the monks, but we do not favour this idea. The Abbots' lodging was in this part of the Abbey, and it seems highly probable that this chamber was the spacious cellarage attached thereto. Fine and spacious vaulted cellars were invariably adjuncts of important monastic establishments.

Passing on to the north walk of the Cloisters, the visitor will, after examining its several architectural features, enter a large apartment, once the Refectory of the Monastery. This fine room measures 90 feet long by 34 feet wide. It contains a stone pulpit and staircase in the south-eastern corner. The pulpit is of great beauty and architectural interest, being almost unique in the mediæval buildings of this country. The Refectory was erected in the Early English period, but the windows on the sides have been filled in with Perpendicular tracery. Fine windows originally existed at the east and west ends of the apartment, which has unfortunately been curtailed of its proper proportions.

The visitor now enters the eastern walk of the Cloisters, and finds some very fine remains of Early English architecture, notably the doorway and windows which open into and light the Vestibule of the Chapter House. The Vestibule entered by this doorway is a beautifully vaulted square. It will be observed that the slender pillars which support the vaulting have no capitals, the mouldings of the ribs being continued in the pillars. This is an uncommon although not a unique treatment. The Chapter House is a room of the greatest interest to the architectural visitor, being a remarkably fine work of the Early English period. The detached shafts inside the windows are to be specially noticed. At the east end is a fine group of five lights filled with effective glass. The architectural features of this room are practically untouched. The woodwork at the east end was originally parts of Bishop Bridgman's fine pulpit, which stood in the Choir. It bears the inscription O. B. Episc. 1637. The Chapter House now contains the library belonging to the Cathedral.





CHAPTER XI.

ST. JOHN STREET AND NEIGHBOURHOOD.

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

ST. JOHN STREET—Blossoms Hotel—General Post Office—Free Public Library—Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel—Wesleyan Methodist Chapel—R. C. Convent—LITTLE ST. JOHN STREET—LUMLEY PLACE—St. John's Schools—Church of St. John.

HAVING, under our guidance, completed his survey of the Cathedral, the visitor may return to EASTGATE STREET, passing through ST. WERBURGH STREET. On entering the former street he should pass through the EAST GATE and turn to his right into ST. JOHN STREET. This will conduct him in the most direct manner to the Church of St. John the Baptist, which is, after the Cathedral, the most important and interesting mediæval structure in Chester, and a building no visitor should think of leaving unexamined.

There are some buildings in ST. JOHN STREET worthy of attention, and these may be briefly spoken of in the order in which they come. On the east side is the Blossoms Hotel recently built on the site of the famous old hostelry of the same name. The front portion to FOREGATE STREET on the ground floor is occupied by the National Provincial Bank, the elevation there being in half-timber, whilst the hotel elevation to ST. JOHN STREET is carried out in terra cotta and has a handsome and imposing frontage. The hotel is replete with every modern luxury and convenience. The next building which will arrest the eye is the General Post Office,

situated on the west side of the street; a handsome and commodious structure, containing both the Postal and Telegraph departments. The building is built of red brick and free-stone; and is entered by a flight of steps which leads to a species of loggia from which the office opens.

Adjoining the Post Office is the Chester Free Public Library and Reading Room, an institution which was very materially enlarged almost at the sole cost of Mr. William Brown, who was the Mayor of Chester in the year of the late Queen's Juoilee. The institution is a great boon to the working classes, containing, in addition to a Library of many thousand volumes, a News-Room, liberally supplied with the leading daily and weekly papers and journals, while the Reference Library is consulted by all classes of the community.

Nearly opposite the Free Library, on the eastern side of the street, stands the Chapel of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, a body which previously to the erection of this commodious building, worshipped in a humbler chapel in COMMON HALL STREET. The present Chapel was erected, in 1866, from the plans and under the superintendence of Messrs. W. and G. Audsley, Architects, of Liverpool (now of London). In its architectural features it is very far in advance of any other Nonconformist edifice in Chester, and, as such, deserves more than passing notice. Its western front, which faces ST. JOHN STREET, is built of a light grey sandstone, and presents an advanced open porch, having supporting columns of polished Peterhead granite, with elaborately carved capitals. Bold arches spring from these capitals, and the porch is finished with a pierced parapet, from which project grotesque animals. The porch projects from a handsome gable, containing in its centre a large circular window of elegant design and careful workmanship. The whole is surmounted with a sort of floriated cross. The style of architecture is French Gothic of the thirteenth century, fully treated. The Chapel, which seats 700 persons, was first opened for worship on Sunday, December 2nd, 1866, when Dr. L. Edwards, of Bala, preached the opening sermon.

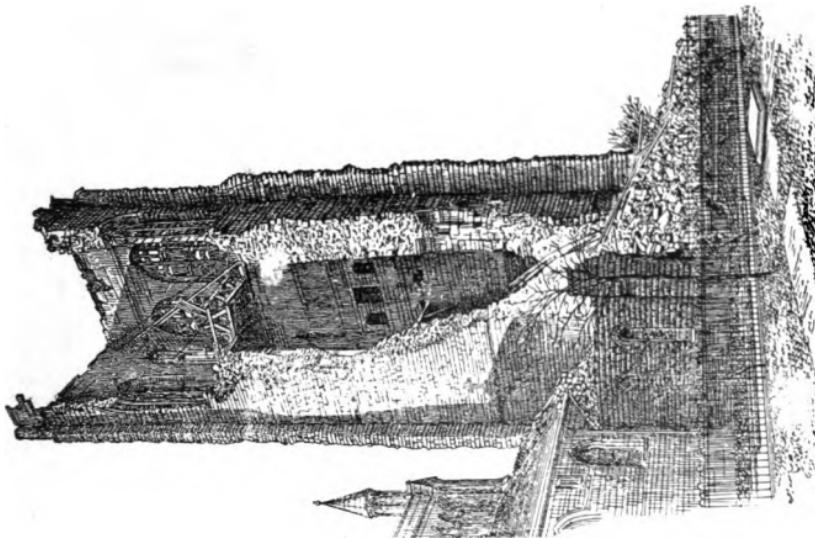
On the opposite side of the street, a little lower down, stands the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, with its schools adjoining. A new front was erected in 1907. The principles of Wesleyanism found their way into Chester as early as 1750,

the first congregation being held in a house in LOVE LANE. Fifteen years afterwards, the Octagon Chapel, in FOREGATE STREET, was erected for the body, and continued to be its place of worship until the completion of the present Chapel in the year 1811. The Octagon Chapel is now demolished.

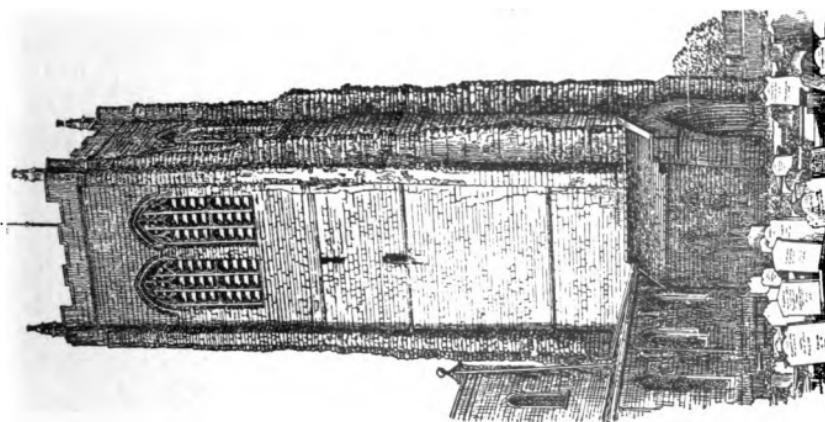
If the visitor continues straight down ST. JOHN STREET, he will come to the gateway of the R. C. Convent of Nuns. This was originally a mansion called Dee House, adapted, with the addition of a chapel and dormitory, to the purposes of a Convent. The best view of the Convent and its Chapel is obtained from the Walls, close to the NEW GATE.

On the eastern side of the street, before the Convent gateway is reached, is the entrance to LITTLE ST. JOHN STREET, and it is down this that the visitor will find his way to the Church of St. John the Baptist. He will pass LUMLEY PLACE, with its neat row of dwellings, and the fine St. John's Schools belonging to the Duke of Westminster, on his left, standing at last before the large north porch of the Church. A few years ago the view which greeted the eye at this point was much more imposing, for not only was the porch in its ancient form, but by its side stood a grand and massive tower, which, to all appearance, seemed destined to stand the storms of centuries to come. On the night of Thursday, the 14th of April, 1881, at, or immediately after, ten o'clock, the first fall took place, when a large part of the north-eastern angle fell to the ground, amid a cloud of dust, startling the neighbourhood with its dull sullen roar. At four o'clock in the morning of the next day a further fall took place, which left little of the northern and eastern faces of the tower standing. The wreck of the tower was not the only catastrophe, however, as the falling masonry completely destroyed the fine north porch adjoining. This has been entirely rebuilt from accurate drawings, fortunately made by Mr. John Douglas, Architect, of Chester, previous to the accident. The tower was found to be beyond reparation; and as the portion left standing was both unsightly and unsafe, it was taken down to the line of the present remains. The two engravings on the adjoining page show the appearance of this venerable tower before and immediately after the accident.

The western end of the church was destroyed by the fall of part of this tower in 1574; and no steps were then taken to rebuild it in its original form. The present west end and the vestibule connecting the great porch and the west door of the church are modern.



Tower as it appeared on the morning
of the accident.



Tower previous to the accident
of 14th April, 1881.

Before we proceed to describe the architecture of this noble Church, we may pass a few brief remarks respecting its history. It is supposed, and apparently on some authority, that long prior to the Norman Conquest an important church occupied the site of the present building. Henry Bradshaw, in his "Holy Lyfe and History of Saint Werburge," written some time prior to the year 1513, quotes the following tradition:—

“ The year of grace six hundred fourscore and nyen,
 As sheweth myne auctour, a Bryton *Giraldus*,
 Kynge Ethelred, myndyng moost the blysse of Heven,
 Edyfyed a Collage Churche notable and famous,
 In the suburbs of Chester, pleasant and banteous,
 In the honor of God, and the Baptyst Saynt Johan,
 With help of bysshop Wulfrice, and good exortacion.”

What this Saxon church was like or of what materials it was built no information can be gained from ancient records. We are told, however, that the Collegiate Church of St. John was repaired, in 1057, by Leofric, Earl of Mercia.

At the time of the Norman Conquest the Diocese of Lichfield included Chester within its bounds, and as the latter was by far the more important City, the Bishop of Lichfield was directed to remove his seat to Chester, and then he founded St. John's as his Cathedral Church: his successor removed his seat to Coventry, the Diocese was, until the Reformation, when Henry VII founded the See of Chester, sometimes known as the Diocese of Lichfield, Chester, and Coventry.

Speaking of the first Norman bishop and of the church, the late Mr. John Henry Parker, F.S.A., remarks:—“St. John's Church was his Cathedral, and was commenced on the same grand scale that the Norman Cathedrals usually were; and although the principal seat of the bishops was removed to Coventry, and subsequently to Lichfield, this church continued to hold the rank of a Cathedral for the diocese of Chester proper, and to be occasionally occupied by the bishop, who had a palace near to it, until the time of Henry the Eighth.

“ This Cathedral, too, had its own Dean and Chapter until the suppression of the Monasteries, when the Church and Conventual buildings of St. Werburgh's Monastery were given to the Dean and Chapter of Chester, and the Cathedral, or seat of the bishop, was transferred to them. This was

probably also owing to the want of an adequate endowment for the Dean and Chapter of St. John's, who do not appear to have ever received much addition to the original endowment in the time of the Conqueror. The property recorded in the *Domesday* survey is nearly the same as that enumerated in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, or *Liber Regis* of Henry VIII.: at both periods the chapter consisted of a Dean and Seven Canons, each with his separate house. They had always been, and continued to be, a body of Secular Priests, and not a Monastic Establishment. They had no common Dormitory or Refectory, nor the other usual offices of a Monastery. Each Canon occupied his own small house, and the Dean a large one, within the close or enclosure round the Church, probably where St. John's House and the Rectory now are. This arrangement was usual when the Cathedral was not a Monastic Church, and remains can be traced of it in many places, as at Hereford, and especially at Wells, where the Deanery and the separate Canons' houses of the fifteenth century are still preserved . . .



St. John's Church—North-east View (before the Tower fell).

"At St. John's, the endowment of the Chapter was always very moderate, equal to about £1,600 a year of our money, for the support of the Dean and seven Canons. The Dean's share was usually two Canonries, so that the income would probably be about £150 a year for each Canon, £300 a year for the Dean, and £250 a year for the Vicars and other expenses, and the repairs of the fabric,—a very small sum, and quite inadequate for so large a building . . .

"The historians of St. John's have commonly translated the word *monasterium* [which properly signifies a "Minster" or large church with its proper establishment] as the Monastery; but I cannot find the slightest original evidence that there ever was any monastic establishment connected with it. The Dean and Canons were the natural heads of the Seculars or Parochial Clergy, each of whom lived in his own house, or in his own parish; for each of the Canons usually had a parish, and resided at the Cathedral only a part of the year. In most Cathedrals they had Vicars, or Minor Canons, to supply their places and chant the daily services for them. At St. John's, the Canons had the assistance of seven Vicars, two Clerks, and four Choristers, with Sextons and other servants.

"In 1547, Richard Walker, the last Dean of St. John's, surrendered his College to the Crown, and seven years afterwards was appointed Dean of the Cathedral of St. Werburgh, with a better endowment. The Canons were allowed to retain their property for their lives when the College was suppressed, as appears by leases granted by them after the suppression."

There can be no question that at the time when St. John's was the Cathedral of the three united dioceses, it was a structure of great beauty. It was a cruciform structure, with nave, transepts, choir, and eastern Lady chapel; and, externally, it had a central tower, and, in all probability, two noble western towers. Speaking of the total destruction of the "once magnificent Cathedral of Coventry," Mr. Parker adds:—"That at Chester would also have perished entirely, had not the parishioners obtained a grant of the ruins from Queen Elizabeth, and so preserved about a fourth part of it as their parish church. Lopped off at the four extremities, but still magnificent is what remains to us, and a most remarkable and valuable example of the munificence and good taste of our remote ancestors. Some notion of the grandeur of the ideas, and of the acts of the men of those days, may be

formed from the large sum which has been required for the restoration of the fragment which remains to us . . . I believe I am within the mark when I say that the entire Cathedral must have cost a hundred thousand pounds of our money."

A sad misfortune befell the Cathedral of St. John in the year 1548, when the Commissioners of Edward VI. visited it and reported as follows:—"The bodye of the same Churche thoughte suffi'ent to s've the said p'ishoners w^t the charge of xxli, so that the hole chunsell; w^t the twoo isles may be reserved for the King's ma^u having upon them lead to the quantatие of xxxij ffothers.—Bells belonging to the said College, and as yett hanging in the Churche of ye said College—fifve. Whereof it is thoughte sufficient to contynew—one.—And ye resydew may be taken for ye King's magistrie, and worth by estimacion MMMVc lb."

So the work of the spoiler was speedily accomplished; and, stripped of its lead, the magnificent building was left to fall into ruins. In the year 1572 the central tower fell for the second time. In the year 1468 the original tower fell, destroying a considerable portion of the Choir or eastern line of the building. We have already mentioned that in the year 1574 the west end of the Church was destroyed by the fall of portion of the north-western tower.

During the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary the Church continued to fall into decay; but in the year 1581 the parishioners obtained it from Elizabeth, and immediately repaired the tower and built walls across the Choir and Transept in the positions we find them to-day.

Before entering the church a hasty survey of the exterior may be made. The original plan and dimensions of the edifice can be readily seen. The remains of the north-western tower mark the boundary of the Church in that direction. Between this tower and a south-western tower, which is believed to have been of lesser dimensions, stood the western gable, having a central door and bold windows over. The present gable and its low vestibule are modern. Eastwards, the Nave, with its lateral aisles and large north porch, are of the ancient dimensions. The exterior of the north Clerestory has been recased in a careful manner, while the south aisle wall has been rebuilt from the foundation. The Clerestory and west front have been restored. All was

executed under the able direction of Mr. R. C. Hussey, Architect, of London.

The central tower is no longer marked on the exterior, and the Transepts do not now extend beyond the lines of the north and south aisle walls. Originally, the Transepts projected between thirty and forty feet beyond the aisles. The visitor may pass the new bell tower, erected to provide a home for the beautiful bells, which were happily preserved when the tower fell. It is useful, doubtless, but sadly out of character with the venerable Church. The present east gable has been built across the first bay of the ancient Choir, which extended five bays eastward of the crossing, and had lateral aisles similar to those of the nave. Eastward of the Choir was the Lady Chapel, flanked by small chapels. Portions of the buildings exist in the ruins which form so picturesque a mass at the present time. There seems to be no doubt that the Lady chapel extended considerably beyond the limits of the present remains.

On entering the Church, the visitor cannot avoid being much struck with the richness and dignity of the architecture of the nave and crossing. The exterior of the building in no wise prepares one for what one finds in the inside. In viewing the Church from all points of interest, the visitor cannot have a better guide than the following description from the late Mr. J. H. Parker's paper on the building, read before the Chester Architectural, Archæological, and Historic Society, in December, 1861.*

"The buildings of the early part of the eleventh century were built of rubble stone only, and at first without mortar. They gradually became better, but it took three generations to form perfect masons; and it is not until quite the end of the eleventh century that we find really good masonry. The pier arches of St. John's are a good example of the degree of perfection to which masonry had attained in the time of William Rufus. This was considerably in advance of what it had been at the time of the Norman Conquest, thirty years before: a new generation had come into play, and had profited by the experience of their predecessors. The masonry of the original parts of the churches built by the Conqueror at Caen, in Normandy, that of the Abbey-buildings of Edward the Confessor at Westminster, that in Gundulph's work at

* "Journal of the Architectural, Archæological, and Historic Society," Vol. II., 1864.

Rochester and at Malling in Kent, and that of various buildings in France of the same period, is all very inferior to that of St. John's. The capitals, also, in these earlier buildings are not so much advanced in style: they are merely what are



St. John's Church—Nave looking East.

called cushion capitals, that is, square blocks of stone with the lower angles rounded off,—sometimes also called cubical capitals. Whereas those at Chester are scalloped (that is, grooved like a scallop shell), a fashion which did not come in till near the end of the eleventh century,—the period to which the design of these arches may fairly be attributed, although the actual workmanship may be of the twelfth. They are not all of exactly the same time: the Nave has evidently been begun at both ends, and the arches in the middle are therefore a little later than the others. This is in accordance with the usual practice of the middle ages: the Choir, which was necessary for the daily service, was the first thing to be built: after that was completed, the Nave was begun; and the west end with the western doorways were the earliest parts of the Nave to be finished,—the eastern bay, being necessary to support the central Tower, was also built at the same period. There was frequently a considerable interval of time before the rest of the Nave was completed, as this depended upon how the funds came in.

"The side aisles were not built until after the pier arches were completed, and at St. John's these belong to the end of the twelfth century, or nearly the same time as the beautiful Triforium and Clerestory were built. The mouldings of the windows, and the capitals of the window shafts, are quite of late transitional character, of the end of Henry the Second's time, or perhaps of the time of Richard Cœur de Lion. The south wall has unfortunately been obliged to be rebuilt; the foundations having been completely undermined by digging a number of graves close against them during the last century. Both the north and south walls were built long after the Transepts: these belonged to the early work of the end of the eleventh century. The side walls are built against the Transepts in such a manner as to show that the original work had been stopped there for a considerable period; and though these walls were part of the original design, and toothed stones had been left for them, these had become weather worn before the wall was built up to them: the base mouldings, also, do not exactly fit . . .

"Peter, Bishop of Lichfield, who was consecrated in 1067, removed his episcopal See to Chester, where he died and was buried in 1086. His successor, Robert de Limesey, translated his See from Chester to Coventry: it is probable, therefore, that the early Norman part of this Church belongs to the period between 1067 and 1105. The massive piers and semi-circular arches of the Nave belong to this period, but the Triforium and Clerestory built upon them are of transitional character, and belong to quite the end of the twelfth century. It is evident that those arches had been built and exposed to the weather for a considerable period, before the Triforium and Clerestory were built upon them. The arches are some inches out of the perpendicular; while the upper part is quite vertical, showing that the settlement had taken place before the upper part was built, and that the builders disregarded it.

"It appears that when the second Norman Bishop, Robert de Limesey, removed the See to Coventry, and abandoned the plan of making this church the Cathedral of his Diocese, the fabric of the church was left very incomplete; and the funds on which its completion depended being thus removed, the Canons of St. John's were left in a very forlorn state, with a large church commenced, and little more than commenced. It is true that the work had been carried on for about 20

years; but that was comparatively a short period, according to the custom of that age, when a large church was commonly a century in the course of erection, and the rebuilding in a new style was often commenced before the original plan was completed,—as was probably the case in the rival church of St. Werburgh's. Before the bishop deserted St. John's, the whole of the foundations had been laid, but no part finished,—unless, possibly, the Choir, which was afterwards rebuilt. The portions which remain of the early Norman work are the arches and piers of the Nave, which are not exactly alike, and were evidently built at two or three different periods, though from the same grand design. The mouldings and details of the bases vary considerably: as usual, the Nave was probably begun at both ends, and the central arches are the latest. The piers are round, and extremely massive, with scalloped capitals, and the arches merely recessed, with square edges, but without any mouldings. The four great arches which carried the central Tower have shafts attached to the piers: these arches are of precisely the same character as those of the Nave, and one bay of the Choir, with its aisles. On the north side this bay of the aisle is turned into a modern vestry [at the present time the new clock and bell tower stands here] but over it is one of the arches of the Triforium arcade, which is of the same plain, early character as the Nave. On the south side, the first bay of the aisle is tolerably perfect, and is richer work of rather later date than the rest. There is an ornamental arcade at the foot of the wall, and a window over it; these are of very good, pure Norman work, but not quite so early a character as the Nave arches. The arches opening from the Choir to the aisles are also enriched with bold round mouldings, while those of the Nave have none. In the aisle the springing of the Norman vault may be seen, but it does not appear to have been completed . . .

“From these slight indications we must infer, that whatever work the Canons did during the century after they were deserted by their bishop, was chiefly confined to the Choir, which was most probably completed during that interval; and they were then enabled to turn their attention to the Nave, which had so long remained unfinished. Their predecessors had built the pier arches only; they now, having collected funds for the purpose, set to work to build a Triforium and Clerestory in the very best style of their age: this was the beautiful period of transition, about 1190, and

a finer specimen of a Triforium and Clerestory combined does not exist, than this of St. John's, Chester.

"The Choir originally extended five bays farther to the east, and was terminated by an apse, which had been rebuilt in the fifteenth century, as shown by an ancient ground plan preserved in the British Museum. The two Chapels at the east ends of the aisles had also been rebuilt in the fourteenth century, though in a very decayed state."

The large north porch which was destroyed by the falling of the great tower, in 1881, was a fine specimen of the Early English style, as it immediately followed the Transition period, represented by the Triforium and Clerestory of the Nave. The present modern porch is a correct reproduction of the original one, being built from careful drawings prepared by Mr. Douglas prior to the accident. The original porch had fallen into a bad state by the decay of stone, and even had it not been destroyed a practical rebuilding would have been necessary.

The interior of St. John's is now in the most satisfactory state, having been restored to its true character and seated and furnished in a seemly manner. No visitor can fail to admire the architectural features, so carefully enumerated by Mr. Parker, and the noble proportions of the Church. There is a Chapel to the family of Warburton, which contains some interesting monuments, one of which has a curious figure of a skeleton, sculptured in marble.

The visitor should not leave the Church without glancing at the three large stained glass lights of the west end, inserted, in 1890, at the expense of the late Duke of Westminster, who also restored the north wall of the Nave.

The three lights contain each four main divisions, containing the following subjects, in the order commencing with the top subject of the left or south light, and then moving across the three lights on the same line, again returning to the first light and moving in the same manner as before, and so on:—

First Subject.

The Massacre of the Monks of Bangor Is-y-coed, in A.D. 613.

Second Subject.

The Founding of the Church of St. John by King Ethelred, in A.D. 689.

Third Subject.

King Edgar "the Peaceful" rowed up the Dee by the eight petty Kings, in A.D. 973.

Fourth Subject.

Founding of St. John's Church by Peter, the first Norman Bishop, in A.D. 1075.

Fifth Subject.

Burial of Peter, the Norman Bishop, in A.D. 1085.

Sixth Subject.

Founding of St. Werburgh, by Hugh, Earl of Chester and Anselem (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury), in A.D. 1093.

Seventh Subject.

Robert II. elected fifth Abbot of St. Werburgh, in A.D. 1175.

Eighth Subject.

Prince Edward (subsequently King Edward II.) the first Royal Earl of Chester, enters Chester, in A.D. 1256.

Ninth Subject.

Dissolution of St. John's College by the Commissioners of King Edward VI., in A.D. 1548.

Tenth Subject.

The fabric of the Church granted to the Parishioners by Queen Elizabeth ; and the advowson given to Sir Christopher Hatton, in A.D. 1581.

Eleventh Subject.

The Siege of the City of Chester and the flight of King Charles I., in A.D. 1645.

Twelfth Subject.

The Restoration of the Episcopacy in the person of Bishop Bryan Walton, in A.D. 1660.

Coats of Arms.

Thirty-nine Coats of Arms are introduced in the lights, thirty of which are the Arms of Mayors of Chester. The others are the Royal Arms, the Arms of St. George, those of the Duke and Duchess of Westminster, the the City and County of Chester, the Bishop and See of Chester, and the Vicar of Parish. The Windows were executed from the designs of Mr. Edward Frampton.

The visitor, curious in architectural matters, should inspect the ruins of St. John's. The portion called the "Crypt" is worthy of notice. It is a fine vaulted chamber of thirteenth century date, original use of which is not altogether clear. Above this was formerly a residence, occupied for a time by De Quincy, the author of "Confessions of an Opium-eater," but nothing fortunately now remains of this modern excrescence.



St. John's Priory Ruins.

After an inspection of the ruins, the visitor should take the path which passes their eastern boundary, and descend to the bank of the River Dee, which is only a short distance below.





CHAPTER XII.

THE RIVER DEE.

The GROVES—The Dee—Boating arrangements—Pleasure Steamers—The Fords—The Long Reach—Eccleston Ferry—Iron Bridge—Farndon and Holt.

LEAVING the Church of St. John, as directed at the close of the preceding Chapter, the visitor descends a broad flight of steps and passing under the Suspension Bridge, which leads to Queen's Park, he finds himself in the GROVES, and close to the chief Boating Station on the River. The GROVES present a busy and pleasant scene during the boating season; all is bustle, merriment, and enjoyment. Few cities in England can boast of such fine boating facilities as the venerable City of Chester affords.



The Groves.

Here a few words may be devoted to the beautiful river so quietly flowing before the eyes of the visitor. Rising in Merionethshire, not far from Dolgelley, a modest little rivulet, fed by a source of tributary brethren, forces its way through many a chasm and rocky dell, until it reaches Bala Lake. Down to this point it is simply a mountain stream; but gathering strength and impetuosity as it flows through the centre of this beautiful lake, the Welsh brook, twin sister of Wnion, develops into a river, and henceforward bears the classic name of the Dee. Still, as from its source, a pure Welsh river, the "Druid stream of Deva" glides merrily on through the rich Vale of Corwen, beneath the frowning ruins of *Castell Dinas Bran*, beside the beautiful Abbey of Valle Crucis, and so on through the Vale of Llangollen—"that sweetest of vales." Winding its way thence past Overton and Bangor Isy-Coed, the river proceeds by a series of zig-zags on its course to Holt; before reaching which it serves as a boundary line between Denbighshire and Cheshire. On the Welsh side of the river stand the Castle and Tower of Holt, an important post during the Anglo-Welsh Wars. On the opposite side is Farndon, connected with Holt by an ancient stone bridge. From here the Dee passes Aldford and the lordly manor of Eaton, before it sweeps round with its graceful curve to Chester on its way to the Irish Sea.

The boating arrangements on the Dee are perfect and well managed. The charges are moderate, commencing at sixpence an hour; these prices are increased on Good Friday, on Bank Holidays, and during Whitsan Week.

Visitors who desire to see the lower portion of the Dee, that is between Chester and Eccleston Ferry, may take the first-class pleasure steamers which start from the stage, a short distance northwards of the GROVES. These start at frequent intervals during the day.

If the visitor desires to see the river, and does not object to the additional time occupied by the steamboat trip, we strongly advise him to avail himself of this method of reaching Eaton Hall.

As the steamer passes under the Queen's Park Suspension Bridge the GROVES are reached, already mentioned. Further on the visitor passes Aikman's Gardens, of the Chester Boating Company, another important boating station; and close to is the Boat-house of the Royal Chester Rowing Club. The citizens of

Chester have for a long period taken a great interest in rowing, and the local crews have frequently distinguished themselves at Henley and other important Regattas.

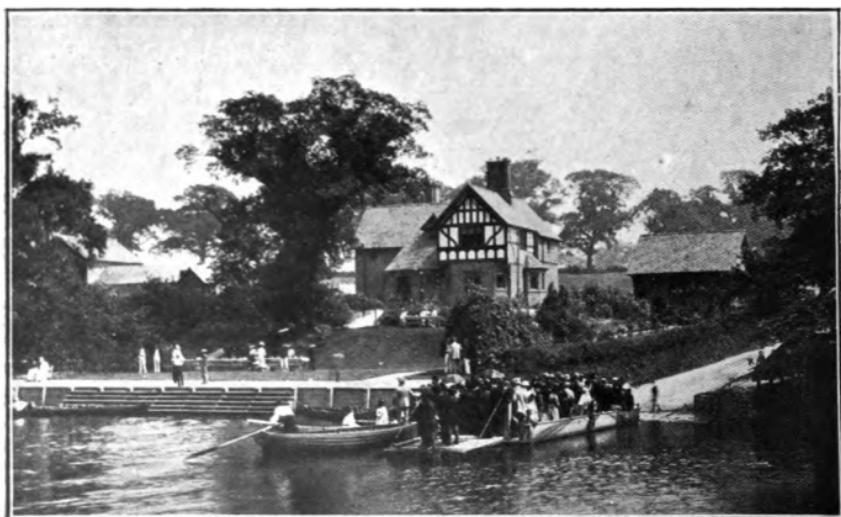


Suspension Bridge.

The rising land above used to be called *Billy Hobby's Field*, having a Well of pure water, bearing the same obscure but euphonious name. This land now forms part of the Grosvenor Park, and a tasteful structure now surmounts the spring, which for many generations had been dear to Cestrians as "*Billy Hobby's Well*."

The meadows on the right were anciently known as the "Earl's Eye," and though now protected by a low embankment, used to be covered with water at every tide. On the left the banks are steep, and are crowned with terrace houses and villas, with gardens between them and the water.

Shortly after the bend in the river is passed, the place known as the Fords is reached. This is a wide and somewhat shallow part, which, during the Roman occupation of Chester, was a properly constructed ford for the passage of man and beast. Remains of the Roman way are said to be visible when the water is low and very clear. Roman rings have been found here which are now preserved in the Collection of the Chester Archæological Society, in the Grosvenor Museum.



Eccleston Ferry.

The "Long Reach" is now entered, where the Regatta is held, the starting point being Heron Bridge. The Regatta is witnessed chiefly from the meadows along the river banks.

The steamer passes Heron Bridge, and, about a mile-and-a-half higher up, it stops at Eccleston Ferry. The visitor may land here for Eaton Hall, or, some steamers continue the trip to Iron Bridge, about a mile still further up the river. The steamer does not go further than this. Rowing boats, however, can go as far as Bangor Isy-Coed. Farndon and Holt, already spoken of, are well worth a visit.

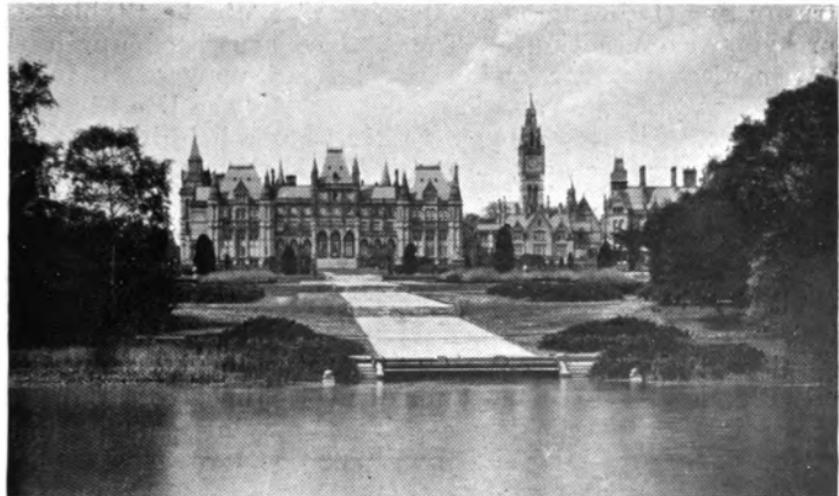
On a fine day, the visitor will find a sail up and down the Dee, from Chester to Farndon, a delightful experience.



CHAPTER XIII.

EATON HALL AND GARDENS.

THE palatial mansion of His Grace the Duke of Westminster is unquestionably one of the largest and most sumptuous private residences in Great Britain. Owing to the kindness and consideration of its noble owner, the Park is always open till dusk and the Hall and its surrounding Gardens are shown to visitors during a considerable portion of the year. A nominal charge of one shilling is made for the Hall, and sixpence each for the Gardens; parties of Sunday Schools, Choirs, and the like being allowed to view the latter on payment of ten shillings for every fifty persons or part of fifty. All the proceeds are devoted by the Duke to the support of Chester Charities; an annual sum of upwards of £1,000 being thus contributed.



Eaton Hall.

The history of the Grosvenor family and of this fair domain of Eaton is interesting, but would be somewhat out of place in a popular Guide like the present. We may just remark that the Hall, as the visitor now sees it, is practically the fourth mansion which has occupied the spot. The one which preceded the present was erected in a florid style of Gothic architecture. In 1867, the late Duke of Westminster decided to entirely rebuild the exterior of the Hall proper, and to largely extend the buildings towards the north. The work was entrusted to Mr. Alfred Waterhouse, R.A., and under his directions all the alterations and the extensive additions were carried out during a period of about thirteen years.

Visitors can reach the Hall either by a conveyance or boat. The latter is extremely pleasant in fine weather, but it involves a short walk through the Park. Should the road be chosen, the visitor will have to hire a special conveyance and he may then take his choice of two routes, the shorter via Eaton Road and Eccleston, the slightly longer but more pleasant by way of Overleigh Lodge and Approach through the Park. Overleigh Lodge, a handsome structure of brick and stone, is situate a short distance from the Grosvenor Bridge, the drive thence to the Hall being about three miles.

Before entering the Hall the visitor will pass through the Gateway into the Courtyard of the Stables. Both the surrounding buildings and the interior of the Stables are worthy of examination. The Stables are fitted up in the most perfect manner and regardless of expense. In the centre of the Stable Yard is a fine work by the late Sir J. E. Boehm, R.A., representing a rearing horse held by a groom. On the further side of the Yard is the doorway through which the visitor enters the Hall.

CLOCK TOWER AND CHAPEL.

Rising beyond this entrance, is the Chapel and the lofty Clock Tower. The latter is 175 feet high, and contains a magnificent clock and chiming apparatus, by Messrs. Gillett and Bland, of Croydon, and a fine chime, consisting of twenty-eight bells, which are capable of playing some 30 tunes, cast by Van Aerschadt, of Louvain. The largest bell weighs two tons, ten hundredweight.

The interior of the Chapel is worthy of careful examination; and its stained glass and rich mosaic decorations cannot

fail to interest the visitor. On the south side of the Sacrarium is a fine recumbent figure of Constance, first Duchess of Westminster, sculptured in alabaster, by Sir J. E. Boehm, R.A.

The visitor will return to the north Corridor, where the beautiful mosaic floor will first attract attention. A fine Portrait of Sir Thomas Grosvenor, by Sir Peter Lely (who painted in England between 1641 and 1680) is seen close to the entrance to the private apartments. The many pieces of sculpture and the fine cabinets containing China should be inspected, as should pictures by Northcote, Herring, and Wm. Jones (a local painter of 1840). One on the left is by Bronzino, the inscription of which relates that Dianora Salviati, wife of Bartolomeo Frescoboldi was the mother of 52 children; on the right here facing the entrance to the Dining Room are the beautiful Tennyson windows, illustrating the Idylls of the King.

THE DINING ROOM,

which looks out on to the beautiful gardens, is a most handsome and stately room. The chimney-piece which originally belonged to a Palace in Genoa, is peculiar in design and most effective. Over this chimney-piece is a fine portrait of Her Grace the Duchess of Westminster, by Frank Dicksee. The six fine paintings which adorn the walls are as follows:—Portrait of Eleanor, Marchioness of Westminster, painted by J. Jackson, R.A., in 1818;—Portrait of Robert, first Marquis of Westminster, painted by J. Jackson, R.A.;—Portrait of His Grace the Duke of Westminster, painted by Sir John Millais, R.A., in 1870, and presented to the late Duke by his Cheshire friends and admirers;—Portrait of Constance, first Duchess of Westminster, painted by Sir John Millais, R.A., in 1874;—“A Bear Hunt,” painted by Rubens;—and “A Lion Hunt,” painted by Snyders, while to the north hangs a fine head of the Irish Elk, supposed to have lived during the second stage of the glacial period;—a very fine bronze figure of Eagle and Boy fighting, by P. D. Epinay should be noticed on the pedestal,

THE ANTE-DINING-ROOM.

The groined ceiling has been retained from the old Hall, being decorated to accord with the present taste. The interest in this room centres in its fine collection of family portraits

by noted English painters. The chief picture, which occupies the most prominent position over the fireplace, is the portrait of General Grosvenor, M.P. for Chester, painted by Hoppner. On the left of the fire-place is the portrait of Richard, first Earl Grosvenor, by Henry Morland. On the right of the fire-place are the portraits of Henrietta, Countess Grosvenor, the wife of Earl Richard, and her son, Robert, Viscount Belgrave, who was created Marquis of Westminster in 1813. These portraits are by the great Gainsborough. Here is also H. W. Pickersgill's portrait of Richard, second Marquis of Westminster, the great grandfather of His Grace the Duke of Westminster. Adjoining this is Pickersgill's portrait of Lady Elizabeth Belgrave, wife of the second Marquis. Perhaps the most interesting picture is that of the Grosvenor Family, by C. R. Leslie, R.A. It presents portraits of three generations. The central figure is the first Marquis of Westminster; and on his right and left are Richard, second Marquis of Westminster, Lord Robert Grosvenor, afterwards Lord Ebury, and Thomas, Earl of Wilton. The ladies represented are Countess Grosvenor, Lady Robert Grosvenor, the Marchioness of Westminster, and the Countess of Wilton. Amongst the representatives of the third generation appear Viscount Belgrave and his sisters, Lady Eleanor and Lady Mary. The remaining portraits are those of Sibell, Countess Grosvenor, Elizabeth, Marchioness of Ormonde, and Beatrice, Lady Chesham. These were painted by Sir John Millais, R.A., in the year 1887. Passing on the visitor enters

THE SALOON.

The most noteworthy feature in this apartment, which is practically an extension of the Central Hall, is the panoramic painting by H. Stacey Marks, Esq., R.A., which ornaments the walls above the high wainscot dado. This fine painting represents the procession of Chaucer's "Canterbury Pilgrims." The Pilgrims are represented with rare individuality and skill, in the following order:—At the head of the procession rides "the Miller" with his bagpipe, "a stout carle, full big of brawn and eke of bones." Then follow "the Physician," "the Parson," and "the Knight," who "loved chivalrie, truth and honour, freedom and courtesie." Immediately after these come "the Yeoman" and "the Cook," followed by "the Nun"



The Saloon.

and "the gentle Prioress," "stately and discreet." The procession on this side ends with "the young Squire," "a lover and a lusty bachelor," and "the Man of Law." Turning now to the north wall, the procession is headed by "the Merchant" and "the Franklin." Then comes "the Wife of Bath" with "bold face" and "showy in dress." She is attended by "the wanton and merry Friar," and "the bald-pated Monk." The fourth of this group is "the Manciple;" then comes Chaucer himself, flower in hand, followed by "Shipman," riding a white horse. The whole procession is closed by "Mine Host" and the "slender, choleric fellow," "the Reeve."

The ceiling is vaulted after an Indian model, the centre of which is decorated with a sun and galaxy of stars, in gold on an azure ground.

The chimney-piece in this apartment is worthy of examination. The upper portion is supported on four columns of Vert-de-Mer marble. The figure subject in the main panel illustrates the "Court of Love." Here are eight pairs of figures beautifully modelled. The subjects in this chimney-piece, and in the two in the lateral recesses of the Hall, are

from the designs by Mr. Milner Allen. The fine Clock showing the days of the month and the changes of the moon ; a beautiful Screen and Venetian Cabinet should be examined.

THE ANTE-DRAWING-ROOM.

This elaborately decorated apartment is perhaps most noteworthy on account of the twelve paintings of birds, by H. Stacey Marks, Esq., R.A., which decorate the walls immediately above the shelf of the dado. These paintings, which represent much careful study from nature, are admirably executed and highly decorative. The walls between the frame-work of these pictures and the groined ceiling (a remnant of the old Hall) is richly decorated with a diaper of roses and leaves, in which numerous fables are hinted at. The chimney-piece is an imposing work of Derbyshire Alabaster.

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

The next apartment the visitor enters is the Drawing-room, a sumptuous apartment, forty-five feet in length by thirty-six feet in width. The French Tapestry is considered to be the best of its kind in existence. The very handsome and elaborately carved mahogany doors will be much admired. The groined ceiling, like that of the Ante-Drawing Room, is substantially retained from the old work ; the rich decorations, however, being entirely new.

The most important architectural feature in the room is the imposing chimney-piece, a clever piece of Italian art. It was made by Herr Steinhäuser, at Rome, in 1869. It is chiefly of Carrara marble, in which are inserted slabs of rosso antico, and red and green porphyry. The eight columns are inlaid, in spiral fashion, with glass mosaics, after the style met with in mediæval Italian architecture. Similar patterns ornament the entablature and the central panel.

Much of the furniture of this superb room is deserving of careful examination. Some of the pieces were purchased at the great sale of the Duke of Hamilton's works of art. The Oriental porcelain vases which adorn the room, are of special beauty and rarity. There is here a wonderful gold torque, found in 1816, near Holywell, in Flintshire. It measures about forty-four inches in circumference, and weighs about twenty-eight ounces. In the recess, at the end of the room,

entered through a lofty pointed arch, is Dalou's "Hush-a-bye baby," a statue of a mother and her sleeping child. On the right hand wall of the lobby are hung some very fine miniatures.

From this recess the visitor passes onwards into an imposing apartment

THE LIBRARY.

This is certainly a magnificent room, measuring ninety-two feet in length by thirty feet in width, and is replete with interest to the visitor. Elaborate woodwork, paintings, beautiful porcelain, rich furniture, a Chamber Organ, and a valuable collection of books, numbering about twelve thousand volumes, go to make up a *coup d'oeil* not easily forgotten.



The Library.

The most noteworthy architectural features are the two chimney-pieces—elaborate works in walnut wood, richly carved and decorated. All the figure carving relates in some way to literature and the making of books, and was designed by Mr. Milner Allen, and executed by Messrs. Farmer and Brindley. Between these chimney-pieces, and in all

the available wall-spaces elsewhere, are the ranges of book-shelves, carried up to about half the height of the room. Above the long line of book-shelves are five paintings by Sir Benjamin West, President of the Royal Academy in 1792. These were painted for the first Earl Grosvenor. The subjects of these valuable works of art are:—Oliver Cromwell dissolving the Long Parliament on April 20th, 1653—Charles II. landing at Dover, in May, 1660—The Battle of the Boyne, fought on July 1st, 1690—The Battle of La Hogue, fought on May 19th, 1692—The Death of General Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham, near Quebec, on September 17th, 1759. This last painting caused a considerable discussion at the time it was executed, for it was the first important historical painting in which the old classical costumes were thrown aside for the correct dress of the period. Notwithstanding the adverse criticism of such men as Sir Joshua Reynolds and his followers, West was acknowledged to have won his case, and the English historical school took a new and sensible departure. A very fine piece of sculpture, by E. Gazzeri, of Rome, will be noticed.

The Library is admirably lighted by numerous lofty windows, in the upper divisions of which are armorial bearings, carefully executed.

From this apartment the visitor passes into

THE GRAND CORRIDOR.

Apart from its purely architectural interest, the Grand Corridor will attract the visitor's attention on account of its striking pictures, statuary and armoury, to be seen to the left on the grand staircase. The large painting, "The Adoration of the Magi," is by the great Rubens. On the right will be noticed a magnificent *Æolian* Organ recently placed here. The Corridor extends from this Staircase northward, passing between the Central Hall and the Saloon, and terminating in the short Corridor which connects the Chapel and the Grosvenor Wing.

THE CENTRAL HALL.

The Central Hall is, on State occasions, entered from the principal doorway within the *porte cochère*. It has two lateral Recesses, north and south, opening into the Hall by two wide segmental arches. In these Recesses are chimney pieces worthy of the visitor's careful examination. These

are of richly sculptured alabaster, about twelve feet in width, and extending upwards to the ceilings. In the chimney piece of the north Recess is represented the "Court of Honour." The lesser panels contain allegorical figures of Faith, Chivalry, Valour, and Mercy. In the long panel is represented the "Investiture of Hugh Lupus as Earl of Chester." The chief figure is William the Conqueror in the act of presenting his nephew with a sword. The original two-handed sword is now preserved in the British Museum. On each side of this central subject are represented King Henry V. praising David Gam for his conduct at Agincourt; Edward the Black Prince with his Cheshire Knights, at Poictiers; Lady Godiva, of Coventry fame; Ethelfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great; and St. Chad with the body of St. Werburgh for burial in the Abbey at Chester. In the upper portion of this chimney-piece are allegorical figures of the Four Seasons, and three shields bearing the arms of Earl and Countess Grosvenor (married 1874); the Marquis and Marchioness of Ormonde (married 1875); and Lord and Lady Chesham (married 1877). In the chimney-piece of the south Recess, the small panels contain allegorical figures of Patience, Justice, Wisdom, and Fortitude. In the centre of the long panel is represented the famous trial between Sir Robert le Grosvenor and Sir Richard le Scrope, respecting the right to bear the arms *Azure, a bend, or.* The central figure is King Richard II. On the left of the king are Sir Robert le Grosvenor and the nobles, knights, and abbots, witnesses in his cause. On the right are Sir Richard le Scrope and the nobles and others who support his claim. In the upper portion of this chimney-piece is a grand display of heraldry, in which is set forth all the family alliances of the Grosvenors.

The statue under the arch of the north Recess is the "Wounded Amazon," by J. Gibson, Esq., R.A.; and that under the arch of the south Recess is "Artemis," by Hamo Thornycroft, Esq., A.R.A. In the centre stands a beautiful font of Oriental alabaster.

Before leaving the Central Hall, the visitor should examine its magnificent floor. It is executed in marble, in the class of mosaic called "Opus Alexandrinum," by Messrs. Farmer and Brindley. The general design has been taken from ancient examples in Italian churches. The walls likewise deserve notice, their lower portions being lined to about nine feet high with slabs of choice Derbyshire alabaster, within

a frame work of Genoa marble. The seats are of polished Peterhead granite.

The visitor will here pass out of the Hall into the quadrangle, where is placed the colossal Equestrian Statue, in bronze, occupying the centre of the Courtyard, the work of Mr. G. F. Watts, R.A. It represents the great Hugh Lupus, the nephew and valued friend of William the Conqueror, and the ancestor of the Duke of Westminster. William presented Hugh Lupus with the earldom of Chester. Some idea of the size of the Equestrian Statue may be gathered from its weight. The entire bronze casting weighs seven tons, ten hundredweight; the tail of the horse alone weighs six hundredweight, fifty-six pounds. The visitor will now pass to the right to the Gardens, but before doing so, if he has time (presuming he has come from Chester *via* Eccleston) should inspect in the front of the Hall the fine screen known as the "Golden Gates," which belonged to the Hall as it stood in the end of the seventeenth century, which are flanked by modern ironwork, made to accord in style, by Messrs. Skidmore and Co., of Coventry. From the Golden Gates extends a noble avenue of trees, called the Belgrave Drive, about two miles long, and leading from the Hall to the Wrexham and Chester Road. In front of the gates, in the Belgrave Drive, stands an Obelisk, 85 feet high, having mosaic panels in the pedestal, containing coats of arms and the Westminster and Cheshire Badges—the Portcullis and Wheatsheaf.

Having now completed his inspection of all the apartments, &c. of the Hall open to view, the visitor may proceed to the Gardens, whence a good view of the long and imposing Façade of the Hall and its subordinate buildings can be obtained.

THE GARDENS AND CONSERVATORIES.

The Gardens and the Conservatories are planned on a large scale, and mainly extend between the Eastern Façade of the Hall and the River Dee. The main feature directly opposite the Hall, is a noble Terrace, nearly four hundred feet in length. From this the Gardens descend to the River. Close to the Dee is an ornamental piece of water connected with it. Towards the south is the piece of water called the Serpentine.

At the north extremity of the main terrace is a small temple-like building, containing busts of Roman Emperors,

sculptured in various rare marbles. In the centre of the floor is a large tazza of Oriental alabaster. At the south extremity of the terrace is another building in imitation of a temple, containing a Roman altar, which was found at Boughton, in 1821, at a spot adjoining where the Roman road passed to Chester.

The Conservatories now claim the visitor's inspection, and will repay a visit. The Tea House in the grounds should be seen. It is a neat little structure by Mr. John Douglas, of Chester, decorated with painted tiles, and a fine series of placques, the subjects of which are the Seven Ages of Man, by H. Stacey Marks, Esq., R.A.

THE STUD FARM.

Half way between Eccleston and Eaton is the Stud Farm. Here are the bones of Beeswing and the skeleton of Touchstone. Six times have the Grosvenor colours won the Derby. Space will not permit of mentioning the numerous trophies that have been won by the horses from the Eaton Stud, but mention should be made of such well-known horses as Bend Or, Ormonde, Orme, and Flying Fox. If time permits a halt should be made at ECCLESTON, itself a pretty village, for the purpose of inspecting the Church, erected in 1899 by the late Duke, from designs by Mr. G. F. Bodley, R.A., a magnificent example of 14th Century style in local freestone, strictly English in character, and with an elaborate interior. The Sexton is in attendance to shew visitors round.





CHAPTER XIV.

GUIDE TO HAWARDEN.

How to reach Hawarden—Walks in the Castle Park—The Ancient Castle—Its History and Architecture—The Modern Castle—Mr. Gladstone's Study—The Library—Fine Trees—The Park—The Village—The Parish Church—St. Deiniol's Hostel—Gladstone National Memorial.

HS many visitors to the City of Chester will doubtless feel much interest in the Village and Castle of Hawarden, famous as the residence of the late Right Honorable William Ewart Gladstone, it is but right that we should append to this Handbook a short Guide to the Village, with its Castles, and Church.

Hawarden can be reached by rail from either the North-gate or Liverpool Road Stations, the distance from Hawarden Station to the Castle being less than a mile, but many visitors from Chester will probably choose to hire a conveyance, the distance by road being about six miles. The approach to Hawarden Castle is certainly the best by this route. The Castle Park is entered by a gateway, situated in a hollow. Visitors are allowed to use the gravel drives through the Park and Wood, between noon and sunset; but no permission is given to wander from the carriage roads. The Old Castle is open free on Saturdays from one to six o'clock, from May to October inclusive. At all other times a charge of one shilling for each party (not exceeding six persons) is made. Entrance by the south door from the Park. Dogs not admitted.

As a writer in *The Daily Graphic* (October 22nd, 1890) correctly remarks: "History has not associated with Hawarden famous battles, royal receptions, mediæval *fétes*, or brilliant episodes. But it has its own claim to points of interest. The history of border lands has always a fascination of its own. And though an impartial Welshman must admit the larger importance and the greater vividness of the history of the Scottish border, yet his mind dwells with pride on the gallant and determined efforts of his forefathers to preserve their mountain freedom, and on the necessity which compelled the great Edward to hem them in with his grand chain of strong frontier fortresses.

"From the summit of the old castle of Hawarden a magnificent view is obtained of the Welsh March from Flint, in the north-west, almost to Shrewsbury, so often harried by the Welsh, in the south-west. Six miles away lies Chester, from which the historic Dee, on which the eight kings rowed, flows in a straight course to the sea, passing within a mile and a half of the Castle. To the north the rising ground beyond Liverpool is visible. East of Chester, Beeston Hill stands out prominently, with its picturesque old castle, and Peckforton, the seat of Lord Tollemache. To the south the Wrekin is plainly visible thirty miles away, and to the west rise the Welsh hills, the first groups of the Snowdon range. Along the march there is no spot of ground without its history of fierce and deadly fighting between the Welsh and the Lords Marchers. The Norman barons built towers and castles on the land they conquered, and beside the more important border castles there are numerous traces to be still seen of the lesser works.

"Hawarden is mentioned in Domesday, and after the Conquest was included in the grant to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester. It passed, after the death of the last Earl to the Barons of Montalt, now the modern town of Mold. In 1337, Hawarden passed to the Earl of Salisbury, and, reverting to the Crown, was granted to the Duke of Clarence, second son of Henry IV. In 1454 it was made over to Sir Thomas Stanley, afterwards Lord Stanley, whose son became the first Earl of Derby. Hawarden remained in the Stanley family for 200 years. In 1653 it was sequestered and purchased by Sergeant (afterwards Chief Justice) Glynn. At the restoration, a determined effort was made to recover Hawarden for the Stanley family, and a debate took place on the question

in the House of Lords. The purchase was, however, confirmed, and Hawarden remained in the Glynne family until the death of the last baronet, Sir Stephen Glynne, in 1874. The lordship of the manor then passed by a family arrangement to Mr. Gladstone's eldest son. Thrice Hawarden has been visited by English sovereigns. In 1495 Henry VII. stayed there ostensibly for stag hunting. Charles, when a fugitive, took refuge within it in 1645. At the back of the old castle is a narrow entrance called Leopold's door, to commemorate a visit in 1819 of the late King of the Belgians. About 1833, before Mr. Gladstone began his connection with Hawarden, the Duchess of Kent, accompanied by the Princess Victoria, came to Hawarden and inscribed their names in the visitors' book." King Edward VII. visited the village and inspected Hawarden Church and St. Deiniol's Library in May, 1908, and inscribed his name in the visitors book.

THE ANCIENT CASTLE.

The Ancient Castle of Hawarden is finely placed on a somewhat lofty eminence, on the south side of which is a deep ravine, which formed a great protection to the Castle on that side. On the other sides, the protecting works consisted of earthworks and ditches which were artificial, but favoured by the natural formation of the ground. It is probable that a fortified camp existed here prior to the Norman Conquest; and when the building of stone castles became common in England, the site was at once noted as admirably suited for a border keep. Alluding to the site of Hawarden Castle, Mr. G. T. Clarke remarks:—"The place presents in a remarkable degree the features of a well-known class of earthworks found both in England and Normandy. This kind of fortification by mound, bank, and ditch was in use in the ninth, tenth, and even in the eleventh centuries, before masonry was general. The mound was crowned with a strong circular house of timber, such as in the Bayeaux tapestry the soldiers are attempting to set on fire. The court below and the banks beyond the ditches were fence'd with palisades and defences of that character.

The exact date of the erection of the Castle is undecided: but it seems almost certain that it was founded during the reign of Henry III., and probably added to or completed in the beginning of Edward the First's reign. It appears, from

careful examination of the masonry, that no Norman Castle existed here: and if such was the case the Montalts, who held the place by Seneschalship to Hugh Lupus, were content with the early earthworks, with their projecting mounds and ditches. The absence of any indications of Norman masonry cannot, however, be accepted as conclusive; for any buildings constructed in the Norman period may have been too insignificant to be preserved when the great castle-building epoch set in.

The leading points in the history of the Castle may be very briefly touched upon. In the year 1264 it was the scene of the "memorable conference" between Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, and Llewelyn, Prince of North Wales, in which the compact of mutual support and co-operation was entered into. The result of this was that the King, who was the Earl's prisoner, was forced to renounce his rights and claims, and Llewelyn became possessor of the Castle. On the collapse of Simon de Montfort's rebellion, the Castle was claimed by the Crown and Llewelyn called upon to surrender it. He at first refused to do so; but subsequently, through some fresh arrangements made between him and de Montfort, he gave it up under the promise that it should be totally destroyed.

Like many such mediæval promises, this one seems to have been badly kept. History informs us that in the year 1281, Llewelyn and David led the Welsh, in a night attack on the Castle, still evidently an important Hold, called "*Castrum Regis*." The Castle was taken, and in all probability burnt and its defences practically destroyed.

Subsequent to this, the Castle was repaired and strengthened by Robert de Montalt (1297-1329); and it seems highly probable that to him must be attributed the Keep which the visitor inspects to-day, whilst several other portions are evidently of an earlier period.

During the Civil Wars the Castle was held for two years by the Royalists. Pennant gives a full account of the betrayal of the Castle, by Ravenscroft, of Broadlane, to the Parliamentarians, and the subsequent siege by the Royalists under Captain T. Sandford. After the siege and surrender of Chester, the Castle was again occupied by the Parliamentary forces. In the year 1646, the Commons' Journals contain an order "That the Castles of Hawarden, Flint, and Rutland be disgarrisoned and demolished." This order was carried out

and gunpowder was employed to destroy the strong works of Hawarden Castle, whilst little now remains of the once important Castles of Flint and Ruthland (Rhuddlan).

The Keep or Donjon of the Castle is circular, 61 feet in diameter. At its base the wall is about 15 feet thick, whilst it tapered to about 13 feet at the rampart line. Such extreme massiveness would point to an earlier period than the present building can be attributed to; but the great importance of this border Castle induced its builders to give it unusual strength. The Keep was divided into two stories or floors; the upper one of which was, as in all castles of the time, the chief or state apartment of the Castle, whilst the lower one was used as a store-room. Adjoining the state apartment is the Chapel, entered through a small doorway with a cusped head. There is a small "squint" between the Chapel and the adjoining window recess, through which the consecration of the Host could be seen. The altar is modern. Running almost entirely round the Keep is a vaulted passage constructed in the thickness of the wall.

The visitor will observe the remains of strong walls or "curtains," one of which is attached to the Keep. On the north was the gateway to the Court-yard of the Castle. On the south was a building containing on the ground floor a cellar or store, and above a lofty hall. Of the high windows which lighted this apartment two are preserved, and indications of a third one may be seen. A corbel which supported one of the principals of the open timber roof still exists between the windows. The remains of the kitchen offices may be traced on the east side. At the north-east angle are some interesting remains. These form part of the main entrance to the Castle. A deep pit, described as the "dungeon," will be observed; but, whilst it was never intended for a dungeon, its uses are by no means clear. To the visitor interested in mediæval castles, a careful survey of all the remains at Hawarden cannot fail to be instructive. Without carefully prepared plans, however, it would be quite impossible to convey a correct idea of the general arrangement of this Castle and its out-works, so we must leave what is left of the structure to tell its own tale.

Charming views of the surrounding country are obtained from different portions of the Castle, notably from the top of the Keep.

THE MODERN CASTLE.

Much as the old Castle may interest the architectural and archaeological visitor, the general visitor will feel his chief interest centred in the modern one—the residence of the Hon. Mrs. Gladstone and her son—the grandson of the late statesman. At this point we cannot do better than give the description which appears in *The Daily Graphic* (October 23rd, 1890), from the pen of "a Hawarden Resident," remembering as we read that the touch of a vanished hand is still everywhere manifest.



Hawarden Castle.

"The modern castle was originally a red brick square house of no considerable size. This was built towards the middle of the eighteenth century by Sir John Glynn, who left Oxfordshire, where he had hitherto resided, to live at Hawarden. Subsequently, at different dates, additions were made. The brick walls were faced with the stone of the district, additional wings were added, four turrets built, and the entire building was castellated. The whole work was carried out with a certain unity of design which has rendered the architecture pleasing, though unusual. And the interior, as usually happens in the case of country houses which have

been added to at different periods, is roomy and comfortable. In the last twenty years three additions have been made.

"A block was added to the north-west angle, on the ground-floor of which was the late Mr. Gladstone's study. Quite recently the late Mr. Gladstone built the octagonal fireproof chamber, communicating direct with his own room by means of a narrow stone passage blocked by a heavy fireproof door, but in other respects standing distinct from the main building. And lastly, in place of the old wooden entrance, erected for temporary use sixty years ago, a new stone porch, the design of Mr. Douglas, of Chester, has been built by Mr. Gladstone's family and nearer relations in commemoration of the golden wedding. Close by, and forming one side of the Castle-yard, is an interesting building, an old manor house of considerable antiquity. Subsequently to the erection of a more modern house, about 1750, it seems to have been turned into a laundry, and much of it allowed to fall almost to ruins. When, in consequence of the American War, the cotton distress grew severe in Lancashire, the old house was repaired, and accommodation was given to twenty or thirty people, mostly men, for whom work was found on the estate. When they returned to work in their own neighbourhood, the building was turned into an orphanage by the late Mrs. Gladstone. Hard by, an old brewery has similarly been made use of for the benefit of a small number of elderly infirm women as a home of rest.

"The modern castle is not in any sense a "show house," and it has been found absolutely necessary to adhere to a rule against the admission of strangers on account of the great number of applications received. The rooms are spacious and numerous, but they are not on the scale of the great country houses, nor are the pictures and objects of art sufficient in themselves to form an attraction. A fine portrait of Sir Kenelm Digby, by Vandyke, and the well-known portraits of the late Mr. Gladstone and his grandson, the son of the late Mr. W. H. Gladstone, by Millais, and another portrait, by Holl, and that of the late Mrs. Gladstone, by Herkomer, are the most notable. Mr. Gladstone disposed of the bulk of his art collections in 1874, but a few of his favourite pictures are still retained and also a fine collection of ivories. This collection is, however, never seen at Hawarden, as it is in constant demand for successive exhibitions."

The most interesting apartment in the mansion may safely be said to be the late statesman's study, so appropriately named by him the "Temple of Peace."



Hawarden Castle Mr. Gladstone's Study.

Although this apartment was not designated the Library of the Castle it fully deserved the title, for ranged round the walls were slightly projecting book cases, filled with volumes on their three exposed sides. Mr. Gladstone's collection of books has now been transferred to St. Deiniol's Library, of which a description will be found on page 170.

Adjoining the Study is the Library proper of the Castle, the books in which were collected by the late owner, Sir Stephen Glynn, a great student of and authority on ecclesiology. As might be expected, works on that subject are plentiful on the shelves. The evidences of culture and refined tastes everywhere show themselves here as throughout the rooms of the Castle. Japanese cabinets, jars of valuable oriental porcelain, pictures, and almost countless presents from the late Mr. Gladstone's friends and admirers adorn the various apartments, whilst books are found in profusion everywhere.

We again quote from *The Daily Graphic* :—“A fine magnolia, which has reached to the top of the house, and which blooms luxuriantly, testifies to the mildness of the climate. Close to the flower garden is a curious circle, 18ft. in diameter, of nineteen lime trees, planted at the beginning of this century. They have shot up to a considerable height, preserving their relative heights with perfect uniformity, and

grow solidly into each other at the base. The grounds between the old and the new Castles contain some noble oak and beech. One beech is remembered as Mr. Ruskin's favourite tree. As might be expected, it is not an orthodox lawn tree, but is of great size, and sends up a number of wild-looking bare arms, in marked contrast to the luxuriant foliage and shapely proportions of the surrounding trees.

"The park and woods consist of about seven hundred acres, which include a home farm, now let. Visitors driving from Chester across five miles of flat, alluvial country are charmed on reaching the park to find a striking variety of wood and glade and hill. One side of the park is given over to the rabbits and the bracken, which thrives and spreads with embarrassing luxuriance. The coverts, which consist mostly of old wood, are of delightful variety, and it may fairly be said that for natural beauty the Hawarden Park and woods stand comparison with any on a similar scale.

"The size of the timber is very noticeable. Strangers familiar with current accounts of the late Mr. Gladstone's exploits as a woodman frequently arrive expecting to see a wilderness of stumps. But the usual criticism is that the place is too much 'treed up.' About forty years ago, after a long *régime* of strict conservatism, it was found that many of the trees had got into a deplorable state—that they were injuring each other—while ugly ones were blocking out the most beautiful. Accordingly, Mr. Gladstone took the matter in hand, and, with the help of his sons, soon produced a change for the better, which has continued down to the present time. All kinds of forest trees do well, especially the beech, oak, sycamore, birch, Scotch fir, and Spanish chestnut. The oak, indeed, reaches, at four feet from the ground, a girth of seventeen feet, while the beech runs to eighteen. Everywhere the rhododendrons spread in luxuriant masses. The humour of one visitor suggested two lines, scrawled on the stump of a tree:—

No matter whether oak or birch,
They all go like the Irish Church.

But the visitor will soon see that this is not true history."

There are several very fine trees in the Park which should not be overlooked by lovers of "timber." One is an oak, measuring about 17 feet in circumference. A remarkably beautiful specimen of the feathering beech, the late Mr. Gladstone's favourite tree, stands a short distance outside the railing

adjoining the moat of the ancient Castle. This noble tree measures 16 feet 6 inches in circumference. The sycamores and beeches are very fine.

Hawarden Castle Park comprises about 250 acres, exclusive of Bilberry Wood and Warren Plantations. The Park is divided by a ravine which passes the ancient Castle, as already mentioned. The further division known as the Deer Park, was enclosed and stocked by Sir John Glynn, in the year 1739. At the bottom of the ravine flows Broughton Brook, its water tinged with iron. Two falls adds interest to its course. The lower one is called the Ladies' Fall, and near it stands a fine grove of beech trees, well worthy of a visit.

THE VILLAGE AND THE PARISH CHURCH.

The writer above alluded to says:—"The Parish of Hawarden includes a population of about 7,000, and spreads over a district about eight miles in diameter, crossing the Dee into Chester, and asserting its authority over a large tract of land long reclaimed from the sea, and converted into prosperous farms. The village of Hawarden, with one-fourth of the population of the parish, rests along a ridge about 250 feet above the Dee. Hawarden has not hitherto produced many conspicuous men. But though not aspiring to fame, the inhabitants have prospered in a steady-going fashion, and now form a thriving community. The main street runs between the Castle grounds and the church, and lies just outside the boundary of the park.

"Just inside the park runs the walk once used by Mr. Gladstone every morning, the distance to and from the church being one mile and a quarter. At the lower end of the village, close to where the stocks were placed, stands the ancient House of Correction, a quaint solid little building of Grecian architecture." Higher up is the commodious new Court House, while opposite the Glynne Arms, the principal inn, a handsome public fountain has been erected by the inhabitants to commemorate the late Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone's golden wedding. "The church is supposed to have been built about 1275, and has much solidity and dignity of structure. The Rector is responsible for the care of five additional churches and school chapels. The manufacturing village of Buckley has recently been constituted into a separate parish, with a separate endowment. The mother church, in which the voice of

the late Mr. Gladstone has been so often heard, was burnt in 1857, through the work of an incendiary, and restored under the supervision of Sir George Gilbert Scott. It stands on the highest point of the ridge, and commands a beautiful view of the estuary of the Dee and the Cheshire coast to Hilbre Island."



Hawarden Church.

The visitor will doubtless pay a visit to the interior of this Church, which has so often resounded to Mr. Gladstone's beautiful reading of the Lessons. The Reredos behind the altar contains a representation of the Last Supper, sculptured in alabaster. This was erected in memory of a previous Rector, the Rev. Henry Glynne, who laboured in the parish for the long period of thirty-eight years. On the side of the Chancel, under the "Vine Window," is the recumbent effigy of Sir Stephen Glynne, who died in 1874, sculptured by Noble. In the South Aisle of the Chancel may be seen some interesting mural paintings.

ST. DEINIOL'S LIBRARY

is a handsome two-winged stone building standing in its own grounds west of the Churchyard. Admission to the public

is by the south west iron gate on the Queensferry Road only, the Library being open for inspection every week-day from 2-30 to 4 p.m. Entering by the west door the visitor finds himself in the main room of the wing where the library collected by the late Mr. Gladstone, and increased since his death from the endowment he left for that purpose, is stored to the number of 39,000 volumes. This part of the building was erected out of the fund of the National Memorial of the deceased statesman.

The adjoining Hostel or Residence, which provides accommodation for clergy or others who come to make use of the Library, was given more recently (1906) by his sons and daughters. The collection, of which Mr. Gladstone's own library forms the nucleus, is designed to further the cause of 'divine learning'; and any genuine student (theological or otherwise), whether living in the neighbourhood or coming to stay temporarily in the house for the purpose, has access to this carefully catalogued and steadily increasing store of books. Among points of interest, visitors should note the economy of space secured by the system of jutting book-cases—Mr. Gladstone's own plan; the statuette of the Founder at the north end of the room, where is seen also a small Greek Inscription dating from before Christ, which records the premature death of a youth called Phileas; some pencilled school-books of the statesman, and other volumes with features of interest, displayed in the show-cases between the pillars; a presentation chair from the electors of Greenwich under the east window; and the large collections of books relating to Homer and Dante, seen respectively in the south east corner and in one of the west recesses of the room. Outside the building on the south wall is a statue of the great Italian poet, to whose study Mr. Gladstone gave much of his leisure time.

THE END.



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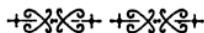
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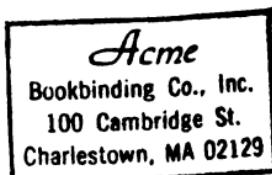
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